

# Listening for change

## Two sides of the same coin

The relationships between funders  
and social purpose organisations



**Commissioned by**

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The Blagrave Trust  
April 2017

What do you think? Tell us via Twitter

#listeningforchange

“

There must be a better way of doing it. Us humans are a brilliant, clever, inventive lot and it must be possible to do it better. If we were designing this from scratch, I doubt we would end up with the same system.

“

In an era of rapid and radical change, the aspect of work which is unfunded is the developmental period of building trust with organisations and other partners . . . In Japanese, there is a horticultural term: Nemawashi, which means digging around the roots of a plant before you transplant it. I would like foundations to consider how they might institute Nemawashi grants.

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## Introduction

What is the role of Foundations in the world of the 'new normal' and are we holding ourselves to the same standards and expectations that we demand from those we fund?

Do we need to establish a different set of behaviours and language, ways of working and have greater expectations to make sure of our legitimacy?

Do we need to re-establish trust through a new set of principles and, if so, how do we create standards against which we can benchmark ourselves to make sure that we are truly effective?

Charitable foundations play a key role in supporting social purpose organisations to create a better and more inclusive society. Yet, there is a strong sense from many working with and within the Trust and Foundation world that there is a need to evolve our approaches and models of working in order to achieve greater impact and to better support the sector as it navigates through increasingly uncertain times.

But the starting point for all of our work is surely how best we can serve and enable the people and communities that we resource. This report shares the findings of a survey that captured the views of individuals working in social purpose organisations on key aspects of their relationships with their funders. It complements the body of existing knowledge and research on independent funders and specifically emphasizes the value and importance of listening to those we fund as partners in social change - a key component of a more open model of philanthropy where we can problem solve together.

The idea for the survey initially arose during the Foundational Thinking two day meeting with approximately 50 social change leaders in 2016. The survey findings were presented and discussed at the Association of Charitable Foundations November 2016 annual conference with a large

## Methodology and intention

group of funders. Our aim with this report is to make the data available in order to stimulate debate and in order that it can inform collective discussions about how the sector can continue to improve and evolve its work.

The content of this report is based on responses from over 640 individuals working in frontline social purpose organisations completed over a period of three months at the end of 2016.

In the development of the survey we aimed to ask questions that go to the heart of the relationships between foundations and their partners on topics such as accountability, collaboration, communication, trust and understanding. The data for this research was provided anonymously by individuals working in a range of charities and VSOs. Individuals were asked to complete the survey considering one funder only - their most recent - to ensure consistency of responses and that respondents were not considering multiple funders throughout.

This report aims to enable the reflections and views of those individuals working in social purpose organisations to 'speak for themselves'. For this reason, we have deliberately avoided lengthy narrative or analysis, preferring simply to make some concluding remarks. The quotes you see throughout the report were in response to five free text survey questions (the full respondent responses can be seen in Annex 1 and the full survey questions can be seen in Annex 2). We decided to publish them in their entirety - both positive and negative - throughout and in an annex, in order to let the

voices of the many respondents and their reflections come through clearly.

We would like to thank all the individuals who took time to complete this survey - the volume of responses over a short period of time and with minimal 'marketing' from ourselves, suggests not surprisingly that there are strong views about the relationships with funders; that there is a real appetite for collaborative change; and that those on the frontline have rich insights to share.

### Help spread the word

Can you help make this report have an effect? Please disseminate as widely as you can. We have #listeningforchange which is starting to establish itself in the sector.

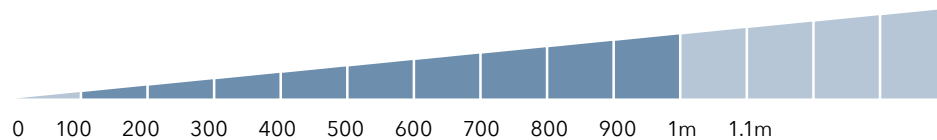
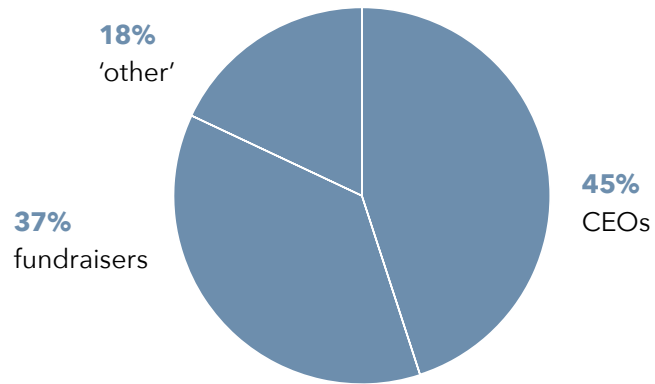


**The funders are KEY to the health and progress of charities and social justice, and I'm happy to hear you're conducting this review, because the philanthropic sector should adjust.**



**So when I sit down to another application, making sure we fit all the guidelines, I cant help thinking of that Einstein quote that insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.**

## Survey Respondents



The turnovers of respondents was generally between £100K to £1m, which is in line with national charity composition.



Most of the responses came from organisations based in London and the South East, which is parallel with Trust and Foundation funding.

# Survey results and respondent comments

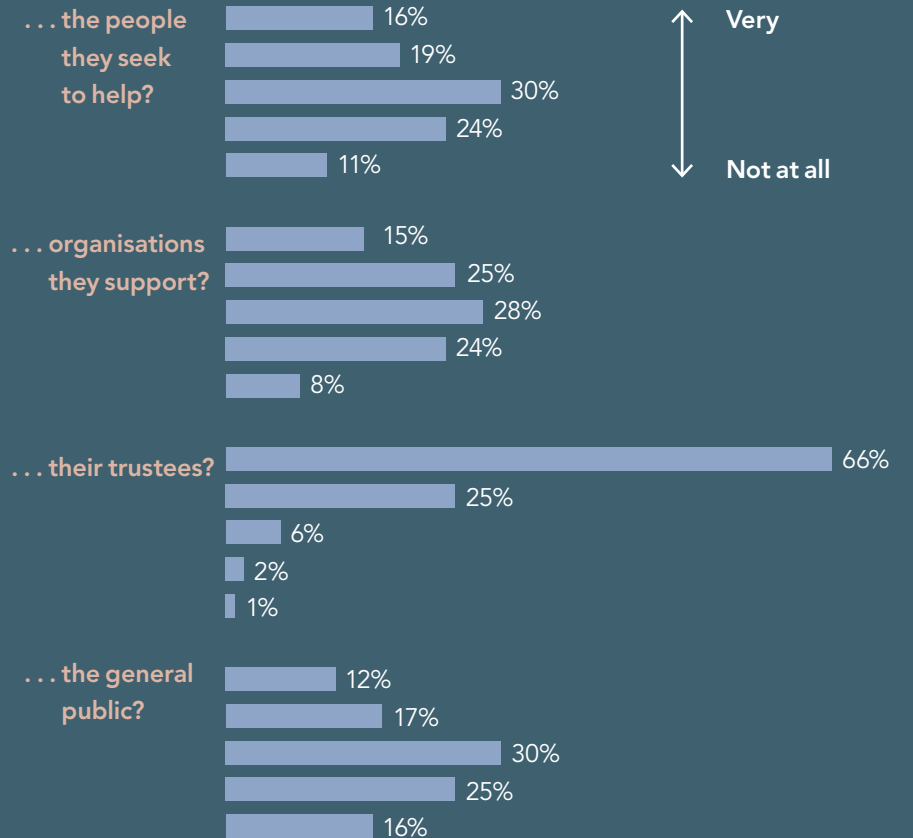
# Accountability

## What people said ...

'I also worry that as a nation a large part of our social policy is being determined by a small group of people, probably people who have access to money and resources. I think its really important that funders listen to charities.'

'Giving honest feedback to Foundations can feel daunting to small organisations. Foundations themselves often appear to grassroots organisations as part of the Establishment which can't be penetrated or needs to be rebalanced. This is not true of all Foundations but mechanisms do seem difficult to penetrate in a society which is increasingly dealing in transparency and accountability.'

## Do you think funders are accountable to ...





# Communications

## What people said ...

'Most funders communicate via paper and never meet an organisation or its beneficiaries face to face. This means that it is virtually impossible to create trust and understanding.'

'A lack of engagement before a grant application. A lack of feedback in order to learn.'

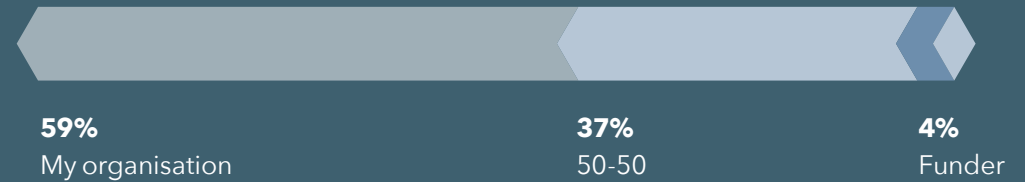
'Funders have unrealistic expectations ... There is an expectation that every single element of the project can be defined and will remain the same for the duration of the project. The reality is that we live in a dynamic world and things do change.

'I have literally never seen a funder own publicly, or even privately, that a piece of work didn't really come off as expected and that that is FINE because a) what we're trying to do is really hard and b) we can learn from it. Failure is currently toxic - as such grantees are incentivised to play a game rather than enter real relationships.

'Feedback on rejections. SO important and hardly ever done. Please introduce it as the norm! Fundraisers are only human and we wish to learn from rejections - of which there are many!'

'Many of our funders have little interaction with us aside from the grant application and report, despite us often reaching out to meet them or inviting them to witness the projects they fund.'

## Who starts the conversation?



## Does the funder talk to beneficiaries before funding?



## What about after?



# Understanding

'I feel funders trust us to deliver, and understand part of the work that we do that they fund, but not always aware of what we do as a whole, and sometimes its important that they understand the whole of the organisation.'

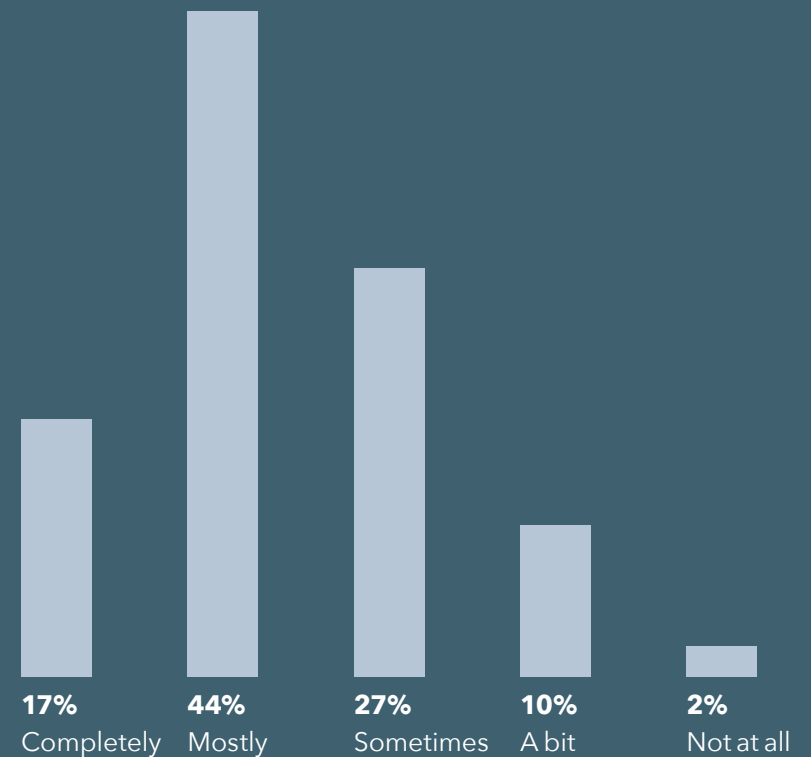
'It wouldn't do grant givers any harm for their staff to do some work experience at a small charity to understand the problems and some of the over the top demands they make.'

'We trust our funders but due to huge competition it is difficult to ensure that they understand our organisation completely. In other words, because funders are so snowed under with applications, I don't often feel they have the time to really understand us as an individual cause and organisation.'

'I think there is little understanding from funders around just what we now need to seek funding for, especially in the social care/health sector.'

'We regularly invite funders to events to meet beneficiaries - they rarely turn up but don't give us feedback on the type of event that might interest them.'

## How well does your funder understand your organisation?



## Understanding continued

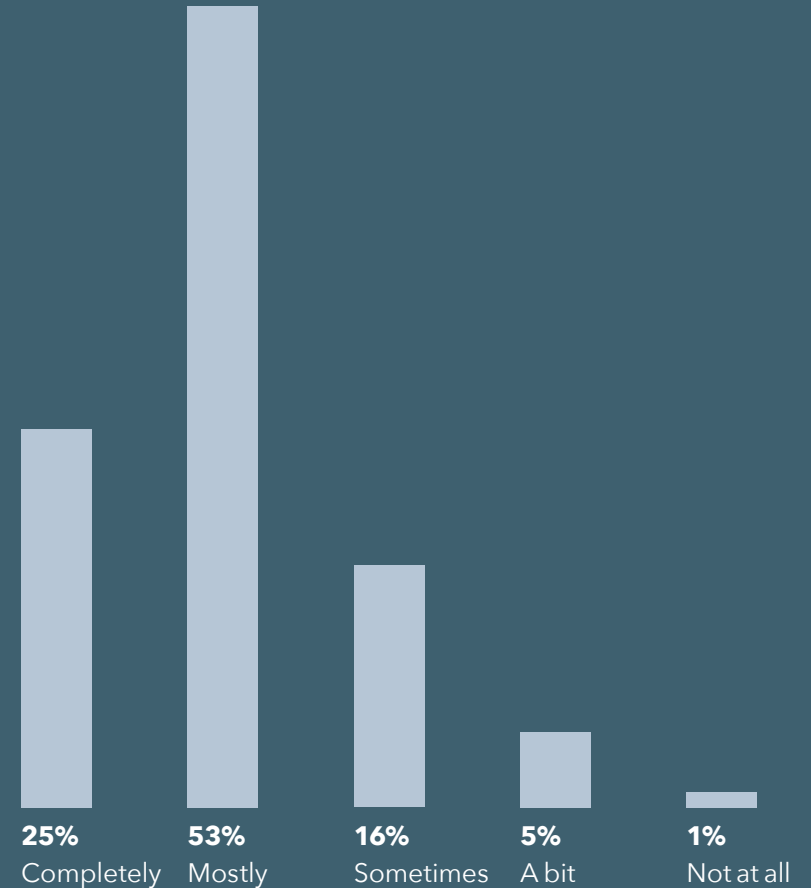
'Electronic systems cannot substitute for dialogue.'

'Funders need to give clear information about when they meet so that bids can be planned accordingly. I have a number of bids outstanding that I don't know what to do with as I don't know if I was in time for Trustee meetings or if I have been unsuccessful.'

'Every funder is totally different. The most frustrating ones are closed, un-transparent, and not humble. They need to find the information just as much as we need to be clear in providing it. Collaboration and face-to-face is key in making true connections, as people still give to people. It would be nice for a funder to understand the sector, the difficulties in fundraising, and aim to want to trust the organisation. Staged applications are great, as are meet-ups.'

'Anything that enables you to put your work in front of them and have more open discussions would be useful. Some foundations have had regional sessions where you can talk to them about their interests, your work and the possibilities - these are extraordinarily helpful.'

### How well does your organisation understand what your funder wants?



## Being open

'It's very hard to try to improve the relationship from the position of the people applying for funds. We don't want to rock the boat, we need to play by the funders rules, we generally feel in the subservient position. I am heartened by this survey and hope we can shift the dynamic to really work more collaboratively.'

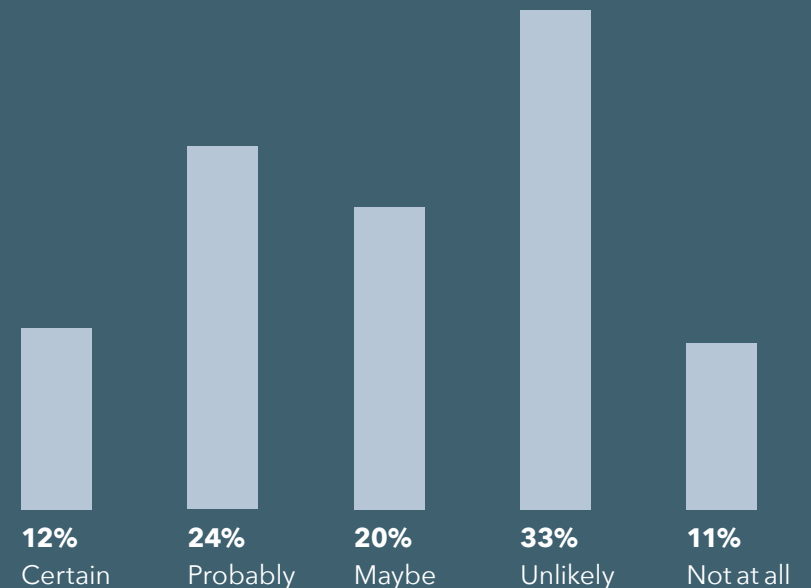
'Relationships need to work both ways, and organisations need to feel like they can approach funders with problems and potential solutions without feeling like they will damage a good relationship beyond repair. As a fundraiser I don't trust many funders to take the view that sometimes a project can go wrong without it forever colouring the funder's view of the entire organisation.'

'The funders definitely call the shots and we (as organisations seeking funding) will jump through any hoops set by the funder.'

'We would probably not tell a funding organisation if we had a problem with their practices in order to avoid damaging the funding relationship. The only reason we would do so is if we were unable to meet their expectations in some way eg if they required statistics that we were unable to provide.'

'The funder has a set agenda and dictates what we have to do to meet the criteria.'

If you have a problem with a funder, how likely are you to tell them?



# Trust

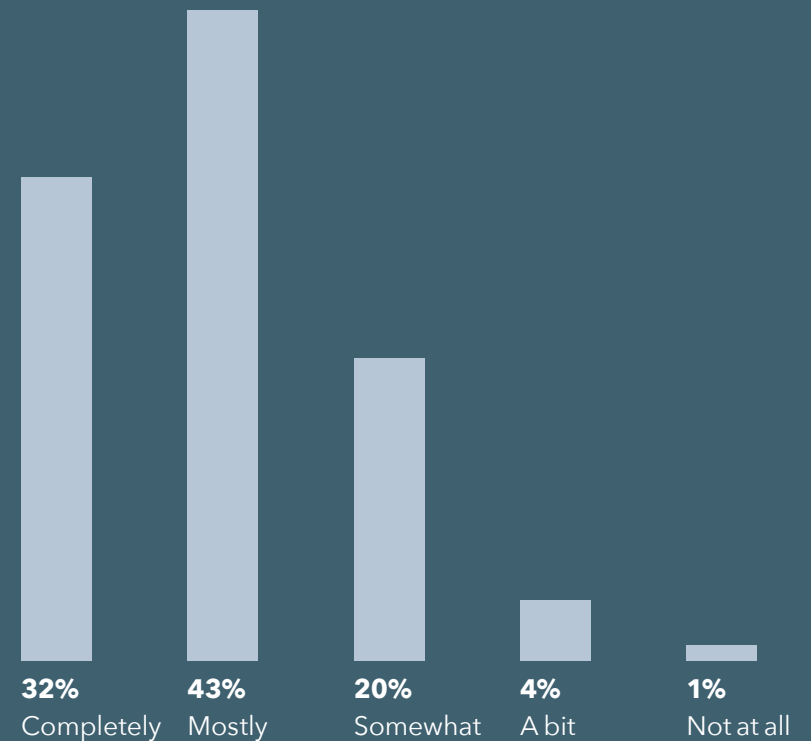
'I am not sure if funders trust us or not. They certainly give us large amounts of money so I assume they do.'

'There is always room for negotiation when it comes to 'understanding'; and 'trust' is only ever built over a period of time. Both are subject to the natural power relations between funder and recipient. It could be said that there will always be a certain level of disconnect between the two - but that's where negotiation comes in, with a hope that funders are open to it. Because conception of a project and the actual delivery always throws up unexpected challenges and outcomes - learning from what doesn't work is most useful. Funders need to 'trust' organisations to learn.'

'It's often difficult to develop trust and understanding with funders when the opportunities to build a relationship are quite limited. Personal contact is vital for this but the framework within which both charities and funders are working often doesn't allow much time for this.'

'On a face to face level, there feels like a great deal of trust. However we have a face to face meeting once a year, if that. We are always trying to guess what the funder wants beyond the conditional reporting of the grant. Invites are never accepted and often not responded to, so that lack of engagement doesn't help to build trust. We want a dialogue, and we hear that's what the funder wants - but I question their capacity to deliver that.'

## How much does your funder trust your organisation?



## Consistency

One theme that arose within the free-form boxes is a lack of consistency across simultaneous funders

'We have a broad range of funder, none of whom have consistent practices. Every one is unique and demanding in its own way.'

'We work with a wide range of funders (approximately 25 each year) and the vast majority of our funders, both private and statutory, are flexible, supportive and engaged in our programme, without overreaching.'

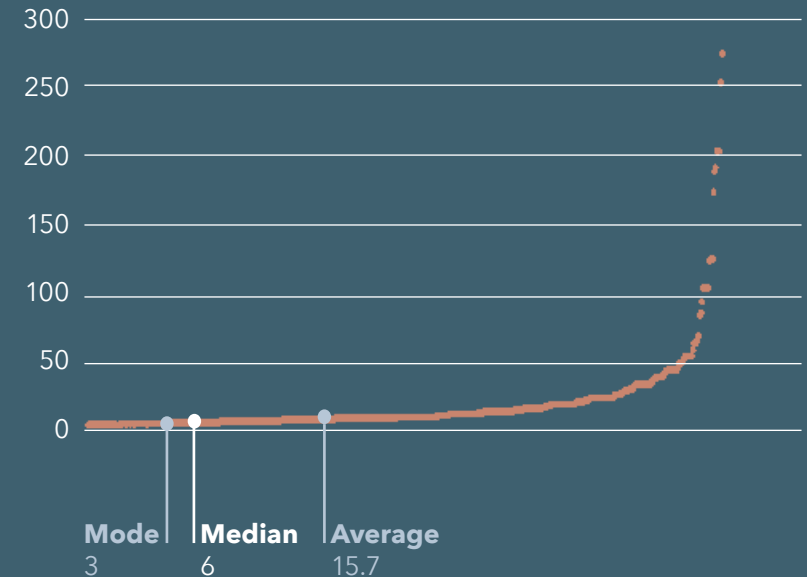
'Some are responsive and open; and others seem to enjoy being elusive and not engaging with organisations at all. On some occasions, it has also felt like the funder (or key contact) has almost played games with us - said encouraging things in meetings about applying but then become quiet and unresponsive, then arranging other meetings but sending another person to the meeting, and then after a year+ of effort tells us that they don't want to fund us anymore (it would have saved us a lot of time if they had told us this at the start). Some funders are notorious within our networks for being challenging and elusive to deal with, and have had similar experiences.'

'Funders vary so much I don't know how I should behave with them - like a colleague, like a friend or like a defense barrister?'

'Sometimes getting large grants can be an easier process than small amounts. Some smaller funders want an extraordinary amount of detail. It would be great to have some kind of methodology where small amounts of money is a light touch application.'

## How many trusts and foundations are currently funding your work?

The median number of funders respondents work with is six.



'We are a small charity that receives funding from 60+ funders of various sizes each year. The monitoring requirements for these grants vary wildly from funder to funder, meaning we report back different information to different funders in different depth at different times of the year - which in some instances can take a disproportionate amount of time compared to the grant given. We collect all the monitoring information required: but re-packaging it time after time in slightly different formats is draining.'

# Collaboration

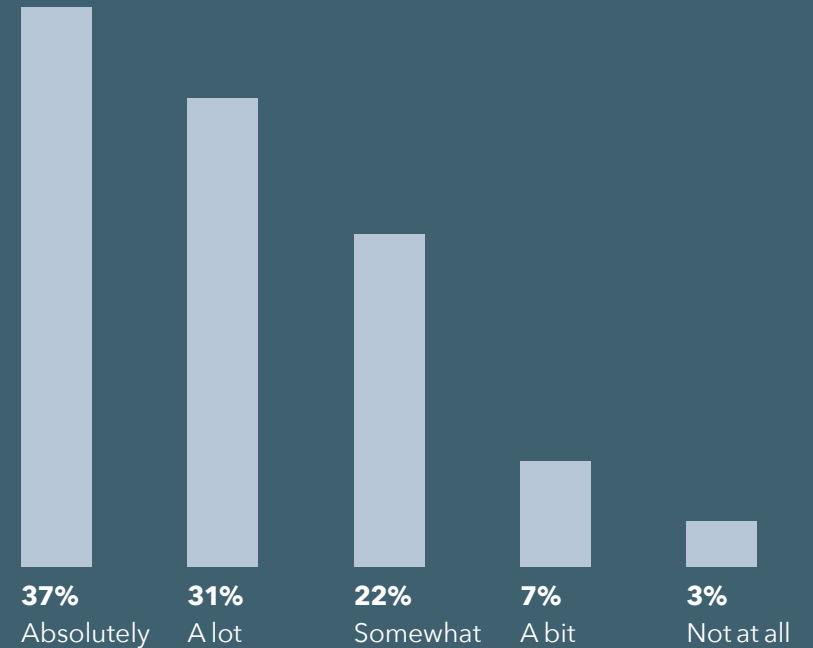
'Would like to see more collaboration that supports the charities wider objectives rather than emphasis on discreet pieces of work as they do not happen in isolation, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts".'

'It would be good if the funder could introduce charities that they have funded who might be able to collaborate on projects and share ideas and experience.'

'It would help if more funders could collaborate over core content/questions in application forms and impact measurement and reporting requirements.'

'Funders should work together (with other funders) to develop a standard stage one application form. The wasted time filling in the same info over and over and over again is astonishing.'

Would it help your work if your funders collaborated more closely?



## Collaboration continued

### What would you most like your funder to do in order to improve their relationship with you in the future?

'I would like them to champion the role of the sector more, especially local, smaller orgs who are at risk of disappearing.'

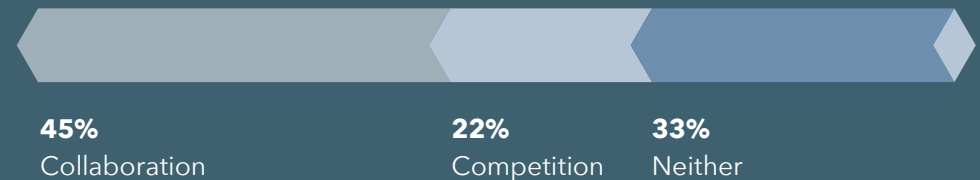
'We are trying to move into collaborative working across the sector, and would like to see funders follow and foster this kind of approach.'

'Do more linking up with other charities (especially those working in very different fields), other funders, policy organisations, media etc!'

'Too often 'opportunities' to collaborate looks like the funder wanting fewer applications so they don't have to make hard choices. Sector organisations are continually asked to both compete and collaborate with the same organisations - what other sector is asked to do this?'

'Our funders encourage collaboration, but without understanding that there are fundamental barriers to making this happen and successful. Just because you have 4 arts organisations, doesn't mean they should be collaborating.'

### Does your funder encourage competition or collaboration with peers and potential partners?





# Capacity

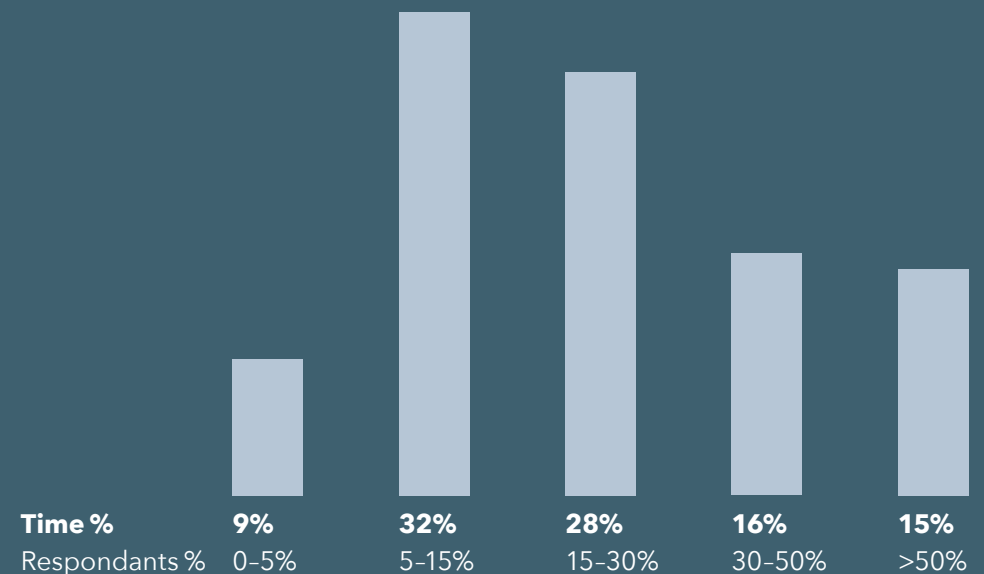
'Small funders that demand completion of a 6-page form and lots of additional documentation for a grant of £1000 drive me bananas.'

'If you multiply all the small charities across the country chasing the same small pots of money; well, I hate to think of all the hours, resources and ultimately cash that is wasted on grant applications.'

'I think we have a serious problem in this country where organisations are being forced to use precious time and resources writing proposal after proposal to countless trusts because they don't have enough information to choose those most likely to support them.'

'It's great that foundations are asking for clear project outcomes, but some foundations are expecting highly complex reporting and receipts for every little expense; this creates a feeling of distrust, and takes charities a way from delivering vital work.'

## Percentage of staff time taken to resource funder relationships



## Over to you

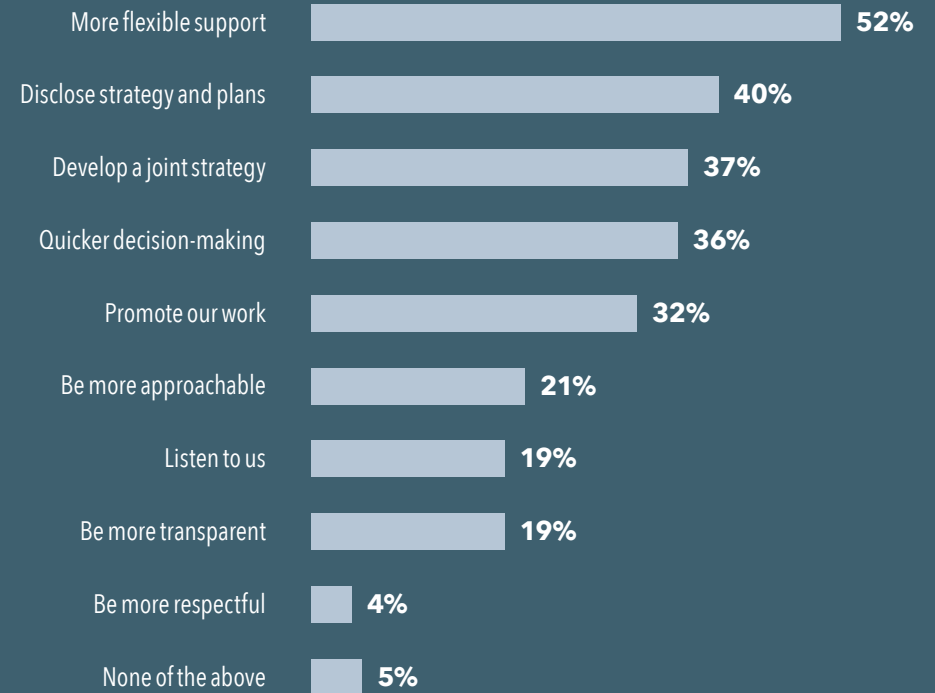
'I know funders are stretched but individual feedback on applications would be so valuable. We can sometimes spend weeks on applications and then receive generic feedback. This can make it challenging to improve our applications through understanding where our weaknesses/strengths lie.'

'Genuine reciprocity would be appreciated and an acknowledgement that funded organisations hold real expertise and experience. Too often there is a sense of arrogance and a 'we know best' attitude from funders.'

'I would find it helpful to know about the criteria against which an application is being judged. We operate some strong core services but it is can be difficult to fund these services. I put in a huge amount of time in addition to what I am paid for to ensure funding bids get written, and sometimes I feel like I don't know if what I am doing is going to hit the mark. I find it quite soul destroying, I took the job to deliver a service but find myself spending more and more time trying to get funding.'

'The overall relationships with our funders are good, in some instances excellent; in others they would benefit from a coherent agreed longer-term strategy to which we both commit.'

### What would you like your funder to do to improve your relationship?



'We have one big event a year: it would be really nice if a representative from the funders attended, or if unable to attend, made an active and personal attempt to find out how it went, how we are doing etc, instead of just waiting for us to fill out reports.'

'The sector faces a tough time and in order to provide a sustainable future, it needs to review its work and how it delivers activities within a financially sustainable and viable operating environment. Funders needs to help us with infrastructure costs which will enable us to future proof the sector in order to carry on the valuable work it does in meeting needs in our communities.'

## Conclusion

“  
68%  
and  
65%”

of funders  
don't communicate  
with service users  
before or after funding.

“  
44%”

would not express  
any concerns with  
their funder if they  
had a problem with  
their practice.

The survey findings and the comments cover a wide array of both broad and specific issues and concerns, ranging from process to deeper reflections on the state of the sector. Nonetheless some clear themes immersed including but not limited to the following:

**Good will and commitment** Despite obvious frustrations, which will likely not surprise readers of this report, the comments reflected the huge value of Foundation funding in the overall funding ecosystem. A real desire to be part of a shared conversation as partners in common purpose, as well as the huge potential that such an approach could promote, came through strongly.

**Communication** between Foundations and the organisations goes to the heart of productive and constructive relationships. Much communications is initiated by the organisation rather than the funder, and the people using services are generally absent from discussions - 68% and 65% of funders don't communicate with service users before or after funding. Not surprisingly therefore, respondents do not see Foundations as accountable to beneficiaries but rather to their own Foundation Boards. Whilst the majority of organisations (78%) feel that they understand what their funder wants, 44% would not express any concerns with their funder if they had a problem with their practice. Many individuals expressed frustration at not receiving feedback on failed applications in order to learn and improve. There was a clear sense from all the comments of the huge value of open communication, the time to meet face to face to explore and discuss issues and share organisational strategy more broadly than projects.

“  
30%

of total organisational resource was spent simply managing funding contracts.

**Knowledge sharing** A strong theme was the value of promoting learning; putting partners in touch with each other; coming to events to listen and learn; and the appreciation of funders that for example provide meeting rooms and/or also bringing real knowledge and expertise to the table.

**Acting as advocates for the sector** There were a number of comments that reflected on the wish and potential for funders to speak out more on behalf of the sector, acting as champions for those who are serving excluded, marginalised and poor communities, at a critical time for the sector.

**Acknowledging failure** was another theme that was repeated in comments, as well as the importance of being able to change approved and existing plans, when context requires adaptation.

**Inconsistency** The survey speaks to the huge inconsistency across funders practice including perennial problems such as the need for proportionality in terms of application and monitoring processes; the huge importance of core costs and more flexible support generally; and concerns over prioritizing innovation over sustaining existing services. There were many reflections on the use of language and lack of clarity around terminology relating to impact measurement. This plays directly into issues of:

**Capacity** The findings show for the first time the huge volume of organisational resource spent

on servicing relationships with funders – for 31% of respondents, over 30% of total organisational resource was spent simply managing funding contracts. Whilst many of the comments went beyond issues of process, the reality of how bureaucratic processes absorb organisational time and energy away from deeper discussions, is striking.

**Collaboration** There was a sense that whilst funders are encouraging joint approaches it is crucial that they recognize the cost and time needed for VSOs to develop meaningful collaborations and that conversely organisations value and want funders to collaborate with each other.

As stated in the introduction, this report aims to enable the powerful insights of those working on the frontline day to day to come through. We hope that it is a useful new addition to the existing body of knowledge that touches on relationships between funders and their voluntary sector partners, challenges funders to hold a mirror up to themselves, and that at a time of great complexity and fluidity for the sector, it stimulates further critical thinking and provokes debate.

We have deliberately avoided making lengthy recommendations because the feedback rightly speaks for itself. Each of the thematic areas outlined in the conclusion point to areas where funders and VSOs could enhance their working relationships. **However, if we had one overriding recommendation, it is that funders and VSOs now more than ever must see themselves as**

**part of a system working for some of the most disadvantaged in society. Together we must find ways to enable a culture of collaboration, open dialogue and trust that enables us to problem solve some of the pressing issues facing our sector.**

Attached to this report is an annex containing all those comments that survey respondents made but that have not included in the main body of the report. We hope you take the time to have a read through them.

Please use the hashtag **#listeningforchange**



**Funders should act like investors in impact. They shouldn't be seeking out grantees to act as subcontractors of a highly defined mission that the funder decides. Funders should be clear about the outcomes they care most about, and then using the grant making process to seek the most credible strategies for achieving that impact at scale, selecting the right mix of low risk, medium risk and high risk investments for getting there. This would help remove some of the discrete game playing going on, where charities have to create a product or service that they think fits the discrete interests of certain funders. Instead, you would have cash markets for different social outcomes, with all of the entrepreneurialism taking place within those markets. Our best funders have had grant makers who could essentially join our Board, they had that much to offer in terms of how we could succeed better. Our worst funders, or unsuccessful grants, have tended to be funders who had picked out the kind of delivery that they liked and wanted to see more.**

**The following initiatives are relevant to the findings of this report and provide opportunities for further engagement:**

As part of its new strategy, the Association of Charitable Foundations (ACF) is committed to initiating the development of a set of aspirational foundation principles; giving a clear message of commitment to continuous learning and improvement, and also providing ACF with a framework to create a strategy of learning, as well as data to develop its policy work and better understand its membership. [www.acf.org.uk](http://www.acf.org.uk)

Local Giving are launching a report in April 2017, the 'Smarter Grants Initiative' – this is based on research with 500 charity fundraisers focused on grants application procedures and provides key recommendations for funders – it has clear synergy with the survey findings of this report.

[www.localgiving.com](http://www.localgiving.com)

360Giving supports organisations to publish their grants data in an open and comparable way, and helps people to understand and use the data in order to support decision-making and learning across the charitable giving sector. At the time of writing, £8 billion of grants have

been published. It is also developing tools – such as the online search platform, GrantNav (<http://grantnav.threesixtygiving.org/>), that allows easy access and use of the information available, and Beehive (<http://www.beehivegiving.org/>), which helps grant seekers check their eligibility and matches them to potential funders. See <http://www.threesixtygiving.org/> for more information.

Independent Inquiry into the Future of Civil Society. This is an initiative that a number of charitable foundations are supporting, chaired by Julia Unwin CBE. It will be supported by NCVO and four civil society consortium members. It commenced in January 2017 and will run until the end of 2018. The ambition for the inquiry is broadly to develop a clear vision for the role of civil society in England over the next ten years. Further details of the nature of the inquiry can be found at [https://opendemocracy.net/files/FOCS\\_Summary.pdf](https://opendemocracy.net/files/FOCS_Summary.pdf)

## Annex 1

### Respondent quotes

Quotes by yearly turnover

## Please add any additional comments about the levels of trust and understanding between your organisation and its funder.

### Under £10k

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Feel organisations closest to communities are those treated with most suspicion. While big organisations use so much funders money for unnecessary management and admin and luxury offices etc.

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We raise no funds, no funders the grants given are from the interest of the investment only.

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I think it's a partnership.

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We work closely with our Tesco community champion, she has been a school governor and knows our work well. She supports us and gears her support directly to our needs as a PTA.

### £10k to £100k

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We have a high level of trust and understanding as we all work together.

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Levels of trust and understanding are high, established by formal and informal meetings, email and social media communication and annual reports.

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Trust funders want to 'shop' for interesting projects. Because of constraints on their own costs, this is often a paper exercise. Online applications and the elimination in some organisations of individual

grants officers to whom the organisation can refer both act as barriers to Trust funders understanding beneficiaries and the issues facing grant recipients.

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Our latest funder is a small Trust so I wouldn't necessarily expect them to have the capacity to be very involved with us. I would expect more from a larger funder.

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Funders would be better served if they allowed applications by letter and supporting information. Our last funder does this and gets a better understanding of us. Form filling applications with a maximum word count such as Arts Council gain no real understanding of organisations and therefore make bad judgments as to allocation of funds.

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Should be a two way communication.

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We have multiple funders and they differ in many ways.

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Useful to know that you are trusted.

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I am happy with the level of trust and understanding between us and the funder.

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The relationship is still fairly new, and there's an element of working each other out, still. In time, greater understanding of each other may lead to greater trust.

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Too one way. We have to give realms of paperwork and answer lots of questions. When we are turned down there's no feedback because they are too busy.

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We are lucky that we have a pretty close relationship with our funders but I do feel that more contact would improve the understanding and trust both ways.

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We are fortunate to have excellent communications with our primary funder.

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We have only recently secured funding from two Foundations and we have needed and been given help to understand the process and found this to be an empowering process.

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It's obviously inherently difficult to be totally honest with funders when you know that competition for money is tight and that any apparent weakness could mean someone else getting much needed cash instead of you. Especially when it comes to long-term governance issues which are not quick or easy to sort out.

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It's a contract based on trust and finding mutual objectives to work around.

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Like many charities, we have multiple funders. Our experience of charitable Foundations has been absolutely fantastic. We have unusual organisational challenges and rather than simply avoiding us, funders (especially Esmée Fairbairn) have been willing to listen, explore, challenge, understand and support. And because of the experimental nature of our work, funders have been wonderfully flexible. Provided we keep within the overall purpose of the grant, they have always been willing to let us discuss changes to our plans which we feel would result in better outcomes, and to agree these.

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Our funder has gone to a lot of effort to understand our organisation, its needs and to identify additional support they think the organisation would benefit from. They have been a breath of fresh air. Other funders are far more process driven and seem to have lost sight of the outcomes that could be achieved with a little more innovative thinking.

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We have great faith and trust in our funders.

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There appears to be a disconnect between the levels of trust that the funding officer has in relation to our organisation (high) and the trustees' view of our work. Whilst the former assesses our work in relation to our effectiveness in real-world contexts, the trustees judge us mostly in terms of how closely our work meets the funders' organisational priorities and efficacy of our governance processes.

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It is important that organisations are able to communicate difficulties with projects easily and without fear of withdrawal of funds so that issues can be resolved using the expertise of both parties.

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During the time of being funded we have always kept communication open with our respective Trust and Grant providers. If any problems have occurred in the past we always felt that we were able to approach to resolve any issues.

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The funder has a set agenda and dictates what we have to do to meet the criteria.

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On a face to face level, there feels like a great deal of trust. However we have a face to face meeting once a year, if that. We are always trying to guess what the funder wants beyond the conditional reporting of the grant. Invites are never accepted and often not responded to, so that lack of engagement doesn't help to build trust. We want a dialogue, and we hear that's what the funder wants - but I question their capacity to deliver that.

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Communication is one way - us to funder, mostly.

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There is a level of trust within our organisation to do its job and respect for my staff, similarly we take and appreciate all feedback from funders and have found them endless streams of advice. When we have come to them with issues they have been open and our concerns have been taken seriously.

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Funder needs to know the organisation but it would be beneficial for them to speak, before funds allocated, or for orgs to have spent much volunteer unpaid time and effort, on what will be a waste of time because it is not what the funder wants.

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Funders still don't properly take account of the power imbalance at play in this relationship and what senior Foundation leaders believe isn't always modelled by staff who undertake most of the face to face contact with applicants and grant holders.

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There must be a great level of trust in order for a funder to give funds to an organisation, I do not question this at all. I think there is a question around a greater need for core funding aside project funding within the sector. Core funding gives small organisations the space and capacity to innovate and grow. Some funders have been excellent with this, thank you! Others require detailed project plans and budgets for initiatives which are likely to change greatly over time. This approach can hinder flexibility and an organisation's ability to be responsive to challenges and changes as they arise.

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I work with a number of organisations and I feel that the Trusts and the organisations are extremely separate from each other.

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Trusts and Foundations seem very closed off from smaller organisations. Having worked inside bigger organisations where the communication was more open this detached attitude to small organisations seems counterintuitive to what the Foundations stand for. It's hard to have an open conversation when grants are tiny but so important. Foundations don't understand that it can cost up to 20% of the grant made to apply for it in hidden subsidy (unpaid time) and therefore it would be helpful to be able to communicate more directly. Giving honest feedback to Foundations can feel daunting to small organisations. Foundations themselves often appear to grassroots organisations as part of the Establishment which can't be penetrated or needs to be rebalanced. This is not true of all Foundations but



mechanisms do seem difficult to penetrate in a society which is increasingly dealing in transparency and accountability.

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We have a number of funders and our relationship with them is excellent, if remote.

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## £100k to £1m

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Our latest funder came to visit us during the application process which we found very helpful, particularly with regard to a basis for our ongoing relationship.

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There is a fine balance between trust, bureaucracy, understanding and adding an additional layer of cost to a project delivery - ensuring promised outputs are actually delivered should be key, and in my view if they are NOT delivered funding should be returned. I have never come across this happening and it would concentrate minds of both parties!

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A key difficulty is that discussions are often fudged by the funder or multiple excuses given for decisions or requests for information - this has created a considerable breakdown in mutual trust. The funder is also totally inconsistent from year to year in its approach which is also damaging of trust between us, and causes us to question whether we could ever fully understand the funder's approach, despite our best efforts.

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As any organisation that is both grant funded & represents Funders we're in a very different relationship with our core funder than most.

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As a small charity we feel beholden to the whims of funders and not able to have a level and equal dialogue. Application forms are a particularly sore issue - even those funders who don't have application forms and say write what you want don't tend to mean it. We're a second-tier domestic abuse charity and the evidence base

and beneficiaries of our work are far from easily comparable even within the sector never mind outside it, but funders tend not to even give themselves the possibility of thinking broadly enough to see the value of our work.

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Blagrave understood our need for diverse funding in a new and unexplored area of digital support.

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Because many funders have, understandably, a set process of application it can be difficult to explain clearly the purpose of an organisation. I fundraise for a project supporting the needs of people with severe and enduring mental illness. Many stay for years and it can be difficult to get funders to understand the need for ongoing financial support rather than short term project work.

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Blagrave are very collaborative and my understanding of the relationship is that it is equal and balanced.

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Changes of policy and personnel are confusing.

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Charities are telling funders what they want to hear whilst doing what the actual charities want. Often this is at odds with what they received funding for. There is not enough scrutiny.

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Fairly good.

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Feeling trusted by a funder makes all the difference to feeling able to communicate honestly and openly about arising challenges rather than share 'the good bits'.

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For us it's not applicable for the funder to communicate with our beneficiaries, as we run a public awareness campaign.

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We have been able to have frank conversations about what the funder is interested in, what we need and how the two best match.

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Funders are generally highly committed and compassionate individuals. The relationship between funders and funded can be tense because the dynamic is inevitably tilted, and the fear of being judged either harshly or inaccurately is inherent. However, the funding sector is changing and there is more and more creative dialogue. I think there is HUGE potential to work as an ecosystem, travelling in the same direction, and to amplify the investment of Trusts and Foundations by working as a broad network, sharing knowledge and practice (what works, what doesn't, why) and understanding change over time/community. We really need to focus on major transformation now, and can do this best and at speed by working together generously.

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Funders vary in the amount of trust and understanding – I think it is a relationship that can develop over time, I have found that Foundations often have a greater amount of trust and commitment than some lottery funds.

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Funders vary wildly in this regard.

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Good levels of trust built up over number of years.

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Grant reports seem to be asked for more and more. I think that this is a great opportunity to communicate with the Trust/Foundation making the grant to keep them updated with our progress and achievements and they know where their donation is being spent.

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High levels of trust and communication held with all our funders.

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I don't know whether they trust us except when they give us further funding which implies they do.

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I am generalising about a number of funders, not just one. Some funders have made quite heavy demands as a condition of their funding (e.g., changing board, adding new practices to our workload

to satisfy their current perception of what good practice looks like). It can be frustrating having this cookie cutter approach to how each charity should operate as we all have different beneficiaries and different drivers and constraints. We would like informed suggestions, advice and discussion, but then to be trusted to do what is best in our specific situation (unless it is something critical like safeguarding).

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I am not sure if funders trust us or not. They certainly give us large amounts of money so I assume they do.

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I believe that our funders trust us. However, it would be useful for more opportunities to network with the grants officers/trustees and other organisations that the funder funds.

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I believe that there is a very good level of trust and understanding between my organisation and my funders. I also understand that funders too have their priorities and limited funds and have to make hard decisions. I feel that the current level of communications between organisations and funders is mainly good but could be improved. I know that funders do not want to interfere and keep their distance, which is very important, but a bit more communication and collaboration would be very beneficial. Funders are not there only to provide funds, they aim to bring about change. So additional conversation as well as some capacity building can go a long way.

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I feel funders trust us to deliver, and understand part of the work that we do that they fund, but not always aware of what we do as a whole, and sometimes it's important that they understand the whole of the organisation.

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I feel that sometimes the funder (that I am thinking about) doesn't understand what happens in the community we are trying to support and therefore questions a lot of the input on our application and then says we don't fit the criteria.

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I feel that there is a fairly high level of trust with the most recent two funders I have dealt with. This isn't always the case.

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I know that we are being funded because they understand what we do and trust us to do it, but equally I understand how rare this is. It is certainly not a relationship I have ever had with another funder.

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I personally feel that funders are constantly looking for one-off pilot projects and want to fund direct services. It is increasingly difficult to find funders to fund core costs especially management cost. Even though management costs are probably the best chance a project has of achieving sustainability.

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I think in most cases organisations spend a lot of time trying to guess what a funder wants to fund and funding feels like it is given on how well crafted the form has been. I think there is low trust between organisations and funders and a lack of collaboration. I think funders should think more about the change they want to make in society as it often feels they are guessing about the difference they want to make. In most cases, funders are charities themselves but do not act as a member of the VCSE sector or as an interdependent part of it. Their role feels like 'other', like a body that is separate to our sector and has a transactional relationship with the sector. This is how organisations treat funders too so things need to change on both sides. Imagine what could happen if funders and organisations worked together to understand the issues experienced in an area or by a group of people, then worked together to think through what would best work to solve/help/fix or work towards that, and then worked together to fund it. This is a recognition that we all work in a system and we all have our part to play. This may lead to fewer open calls for funding but could lead to real social change and understanding not just faffing about and creating sticking plasters. Or it could lead to more testing and piloting to really understand the issues before an open call for funding.

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I think it's quite difficult to know how much trust there is. I guess evaluation and updates help this process but communication is often only initiated when funding reports are needed and so it doesn't feel like an ongoing relationship often.

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I think real trust and understanding is difficult to establish when the existence of one party's services are completely dependent on the other. The problem with all these questions is that Foundations are very different, so generalisations are difficult to make.

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I think that there is a great deal of trust between both. Some funders have more understanding and interest than others. Some just ask for reports on how funding was spent.

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I think that there should be more working between us.

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I think that various funders have different approaches to understanding their grantees - some are more 'hands off' than others.

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I think there is a need for some Trusts to better understand that the aims/aspirations of a charity when developing and seeking funds for projects might not always materialise once the project starts. Delivering projects to vulnerable, at risk and sometimes challenging clients is not easy and what was originally envisaged does not always transpire. If this is not understood it can create tensions/anxieties that the funding may need to be returned. I think there needs to be a shift in emphasis among funders from compliance to learning - shared learning. I think this will help increase trust and confidence between funders and funded.

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I think trust and understanding grows over a few years. Level of relationship between our organisation and our contact person is very important.

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In general these are high in that I would tell them about any problems sooner rather than later and invite some negotiation which I know would be constructive.

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In my experience, funders who make the effort to visit, to really get to know our project and local landscape have a heightened sense of trust with our organisation in comparison to those who know us from what they have read on an application form.

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In our two most recent application processes and grant awards (both in the last six months) we've experienced a notable increase in trust and transparency between us the charity and our funders. Both grants were multi-year awards so the stakes felt high on both sides. We are hopeful that we have entered into a balanced relationship where the funders are trusting us to do what we do and there is mutual agreement on the deliverables of the grant. As a small charity, the trusts have both acknowledged that we need a supportive and flexible approach which is vital and very important to us.

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In our work the beneficiaries are very hard to define so accountability has to be between funder and organisation.

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It is complex as I am disabled so it is not the easiest thing to do.

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It is frustrating as we know what is needed, who needs it, how to deliver it and how to measure the outcomes, I feel we have to adapt programmes to meet the criteria not meet the needs of our communities.

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It is hard to give a clear answer on this as we have a number of Foundations who support us, some over many years. Most Foundations trust us to know our own needs, clients and outcomes some are working to their own agenda that sometimes conflicts with those they seek to fund.

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It is important for funders to trust their grantee once they have decided to fund the organisation. Most funders we have worked with have high levels of understanding about what we do and the challenges we face.

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It is our job as fundraisers to learn as much as possible about the funder. More than just their eligibility criteria, but what they fund, how much, why etc. Some are closed, and we have little to go on, which is frustrating because we could have a project they love, but the communication is one way. Some are much more collaborative, but again, we are not talking to trustees who make the decision, but administrators who say they want to work with us, but don't actually do it in practice. We want to present the truth of our work, as we believe many funders would align with our impact. However, the process gets in the way of truly building relationships and therefore trust. Also, a fundraising bid in writing isn't the only way to communicate.

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It varies very significantly from funder to funder. We have one charitable Foundation funder that we feel very trusted by, and that we understand well; other Foundations are less known to us. Trust has to be built on both sides and that takes time that funders often, for good reasons, do not have.

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It's a long established relationship based on a connection between a senior figure on our Board and the funder. I don't really have any understanding of whether the funder actively supports and understands us or whether they feel obliged to their friend. I don't know whether the funding would continue if this connection was broken for any reason.

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It's a relatively new relationship, but they thoroughly investigated our practices and plans.

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It's a very good working relationship and we feel trusted and understood, which very much supports our motivation and ability to do good work.

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It's important to have a named contact whom you can pick up the phone to and develop a working relationship with.

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It's mostly true that the more there is mutual, the more there is likely to be honest and timely dialogue in both directions.

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Just entering two new funder relationships but feel they understand us and our capacity/needs well - and make less demands that Arts Council! (which is good as leaves us time to get on with things).

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Levels of trust and understanding are maintained by a comprehensive reporting process that involves annual surveys of beneficiaries to determine the impact of our organisation and the funding provided by our funders, both in terms of direct impact on the beneficiary itself and the indirect and wider social and economic impacts on the community.

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More frequent communication would help.

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Most Foundations we deal with are very 'hands off'. Our Trust funders are mainly smaller scale. We do feel that they trust us to do what we do and that it is our responsibility to find/express our work in a way which resonates with the funder.

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Most funders communicate via paper and never meet an organisation or its beneficiaries face to face. This means that it is virtually impossible to create trust and understanding.

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Most funders we have contact with (EFF and one or two larger funders excepted) give their grant and some expect a report a year later. Other

than that, it is unusual to hear from them. I am not sure that, on that basis, it is even meaningful to talk about trust and understanding.

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My org has several project funders and they vary a great deal - some are fab, others less so. Some have little understanding of our context and/or work, others are brighter and more ethically generous.

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My organisation provides a service which is often difficult to outline within the standardised application processes of many funders, and which can be difficult to report on in the short-term. Our funders are very understanding of this, and often welcome more appropriate, tailored communications and in-person meetings. This requires a degree of trust, as our funders have often needed to allow us to report/apply differently to some of the other organisations they support.

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Not all Trusts/Foundations are the same. Some show great trust - others not interested.

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Often what is seemingly wanted or required turns out not to be and new requirements can surface throughout the course of the grant.

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Onus is on both sides - but given dependency of many charities on Trusts & Foundations, doesn't feel like an equal power balance.

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Open communication.

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Our experience with our most recent funders is that once they have awarded a grant, they show a high level of trust in us - and I welcome this.

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Our Foundation is funded by a single funder known to the trustees, this person keeps very informed of the activities of the Foundation that way trust and understanding is enabled. Our other funder is the UK Government via Gift Aid. As a result we feel a responsibility to be as transparent and open as possible.

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Our funder provides a wide range of support and ensures there are open lines of communication, all of which contributes to high levels of trust and understanding.

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Our funder spent a great deal of time meeting with staff & chair and carried out independent research before recommending a grant me made. She demonstrated a clear understanding of our work and evidently trusts us to make her recommendation.

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Our funder, in this instance Esmée Fairbairn, have been reticence to engage with us since the beginning of our grant period and, during the application process were hostile. No face to face meetings, but possibly because we're based out of London.

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Our funders have been engaged and understand our work based on our conversations or/and bid. It's not an in depth understanding but this would be difficult to achieve. I think there has to be a good amount of trust either way.

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Our most recent funder took time to understand us as an organisation, to understand the motivations and abilities of the staff that would be delivering the work they are funding, and to engage with the Chair of trustees.

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Our relationship has developed over the years. Our funder has challenged us and helped us to develop to become more sustainable. They have been clear about what they want us to do and how we need to report and have trusted us to get on with it. We wouldn't still exist without this help and challenge.

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Our relationship is quite formal so it's hard to answer these questions about trust and understanding.

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Some grant reports are incredibly time consuming and require much effort to meet their needs. It is very difficult for small scale charities and for volunteer fundraisers to meet their requirements.

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The funder has great trust in us in regards to our programme outcomes.

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The funder is rather secretive, no direct communication links, no quick responses to reports submitted or to our queries and grant tranches are late in coming which has an impact on beneficiaries. The funder switches rapidly from understanding the issues to questioning our actions - all in one sentence! Feel that it is not a question of trust but more a question of the funder taking the time to know more and understand our objectives, and if this can be done or deepened, trust will surely follow.

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The funder understands the small and unique role that our organisation has. This is vital to our function.

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The funders definitely call the shots and we (as organisations seeking funding) will jump through any hoops set by the funder.

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The level of trust and understanding is high. The funder has funded our sector over many years.

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The PHF have been exemplary in our long experience funders for our charity. Their application process and management of subsequent projects has been typified by a supportive and flexible approach that has enabled us to maximise the impacts of their funding for our beneficiaries.

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The relationship our organisation has with its funder is a mutually strong and open one.

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The relationships between charities and funders are unequal and so tend to be guarded on our side. Being frank could cost us a grant so we get on with our work and put the best possible spin on everything.

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The work we do is very challenging and demanding. Knowing that there is clear, mutual understanding and trust is very important, valued and helpful - whether to celebrate successes, share problems, or ask to review expectations in line with changes.

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There are many different types of funders and they all have their own methods and levels of engagement with our work. Generally, the larger funders are more engaged, but they do not have time to attend our national conference or stewardship events when they would gain a better understanding of our work. Corporate funders can have more time for this if there is a special connection amongst their staff.

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There is a continual process to maintain the relationship between the organisation and the funder and it is always useful when both parties commit to developing the relationship. We've particularly found that keeping funders up to date at all times of the organisation's activities contributes well to developing the relationship.

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There is clearly a power dynamic in grant giving relationships that puts the funded organisation in a supplicant position, often feeling unconfident about challenging a funders systems and assumptions.

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There is often a disconnect between the way in which the funder perceives the group they want to help and the way that the organisation talks about the work it does.

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There is sufficient trust to be happy with light-touch reporting and to make an award to our core costs - both of which allow us to get on with delivering the work that the funder is actually supporting us to deliver. However, we have known this funder for a number of years and fully appreciate it takes time to establish such a relationship.

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These levels vary greatly between funders; with some the trust and understanding is great, others much less so.

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They are asking us for info on the state of the sector and advice on whom/what else they might fund in future.

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They are constantly evolving relationships, hopefully always moving towards greater and greater levels of both trust and understanding. When you start, you've read the guidelines, etc., but you don't necessarily have a full understanding and they are necessarily testing the ground with how far they can trust you.

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They have shown great understanding by signposting us to other relevant potential partners. And trust in going along with our ideas.

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Think there needs to be an overt discussion about power dynamics & learning motivations of Foundations & orgs if good levels of trust & understanding are to be achieved.

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This can vary drastically - some write a cheque and you never hear from them, others feel much more supportive.

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This depends very much on the funder, they are quite different.

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This funder is very short-staffed & doesn't want a lot of interaction with its grantees.

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This is a repeat fund and we have met them face to face which helps the level of understanding. This is rarely the case with our funders though.

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This is an unusually positive and involved relationship and the funder also funds several of our beneficiary organisations direct themselves, hence the levels of contact. (We are an umbrella organisation supporting other organisations.)

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This is generally very good when it's based on direct one-to-one conversations.

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This particular funder is new, so we are still getting to know each other.

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This varies so much between different funders. Some Foundations are mini-Arts Councils, others are ad-hoc supporters and we need both!

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This was a repeat funder, so understanding and trust were high.

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To date the best funders (and the ones we have the greatest success with) are the ones who visit us and build a relationship with us (other than simply reporting to and/or form filing).

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Trust and understanding are fine. It's the low level of engagement that frustrates us.

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Trust and understanding are very difficult words to use. As a small organisation, I feel very much at the mercy of the funding system, and in particular the lack of risk taking in the funding system. I would love to develop trust and understanding with my funders but at the moment there is very little trust and I think very little understanding from some of them about my purpose.

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Trust is implicit - a funder does not fund unless it 'trusts' the delivery organisation. Understanding varies significantly between funders - some do not seek a relationship beyond written application others make significant effort. Visit, meet beneficiaries and or enter dialogue.

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Trust varies hugely with funders, often depending on how hands on they are. We often find those who are more hands on rely less on formal grant reporting which often feels unnecessary, and more on gut instinct, relationships and learning through experiencing our activity.

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'Understanding' is reasonably straightforward in this context. 'Trust' is tricky. The funder must assure itself through due diligence and its application process that the organisation is highly professional and the proposed programme is capable of delivering the outcomes stated. To take any of this on trust would be a mistake.

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Understanding the work of the organisation is absolutely key. We greatly value the time that our funder took to visit us, to listen to us and to understand what we do. It is key to building a relationship of trust.

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Very good - we keep funders updated with any variance to the scheme and ask for a bit of flexibility if the work is being delivered but different outcomes to the expected ones arise.

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Very important that we have this mutual trust and understanding.

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We appreciate the understanding when a project doesn't quite run as anticipated and we have to ask the funder if we can revise targets.

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We are a corporate Foundation so intimately connected with our funder.

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We are immensely grateful for the support we have received and believe we have a very understanding and supportive funder. As such we have a high level of trust between us.

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We believe it's imperative for a funder and organisation it is supporting to have a relationship built on honesty and trust with the ability to communicate openly as and when required to ensure beneficiaries receive a high quality service. We strive to build mutually beneficial open relationships with all of our funders.

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We believe that we operate with high levels of trust between our funders and our organisation, we try hard to offer them access to our staff and beneficiaries.

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We believe we are generally trusted in the work that we do, but that funders generally don't have time to engage on more than a periphery level with our activity (with some exceptions).

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We experience a wide range of difference between funders, some very interested (such as Big Lottery and Tudor Trust) others just require 6 monthly or annual reports. Those that understand and trust that you are delivering what you say you will are more likely to consider re-funding.

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We feel it is important to develop a very open trusting and honest relationship with our funders, the same as with young people as these are our two main jobs without funding you have no service delivery to young people.

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We get the sense that funders are very busy, important and hard-pressed. They are like benevolent autocrats. They want to do the right thing but it's a huge strain putting themselves in the shoes of their apprehensive clients/grateful recipients.

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We have a good relationship where we communicate any issues and keep them informed, this has been important where there have been changes to the grant or outcomes. It does, however, feel very much that we are providing information to the funder rather than the funder seeing our organisation more widely. They are interested in the project they fund, fair enough, but maybe understanding how it fits within the whole organisation would also be good and may help decision making on the grant application or future funding.

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We have and have had a range of funders over the years. Three or four have been exceptionally supportive and flexible and have helped us to survive and strengthen. That is partly because they trusted us to be open and honest and partly because their trustees allowed the execs to use judgement to flex rules and guidelines.

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We have different funders so it varies. I would say one of our funders trusts and understands us a lot, most somewhat, and one not at all.

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We have had a grant from this funder before, some years ago, so this is not a new relationship. We respect them very highly and like their ethos. We feel that they respect us too.

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We trust our funders but due to huge competition it is difficult to ensure that they understand our organisation completely. In other words, because funders are so snowed under with applications, I don't often feel they have the time to really understand us as an individual cause and organisation.

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We will often meet and discuss issues before we submit a funding application.

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We've had a relationship with this particular funder going back some years. They are a progressive funder with very clear criteria, processes and lines of communication. They are one of the ones who is more likely to be accountable both to us, the public and their trustees - I wouldn't say this about most funders. They are also one of the funders who will do some in depth due diligence on the organisation, and the project idea, have a good knowledge of the sectors they work in, and will make decisions on grants from this information. They then leave the grantee to get on with the work.

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With regards to beneficiaries, we are a strategic legal organisation, and so the low scores against those questions are not indicative of poor practice, more about the difficulties of communicating with such a large and vulnerable group. We have strong levels of trust and understanding between our organisation and our funders.

## £1m to £5m

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There is an implicit sense of trust and limited intervention once (for example) a grant has been made.

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Positive, productive, open dialogue leads to good trust and understanding. Time, on both sides, is inevitably the constraining factor.

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This is a very challenging set of questions. Some individual grant officers do manage to get past it but they are rare. Funding is often so programmatic, and so heavily tied to particular outputs - in some contexts this might be suitable but in others it is profoundly naive - the consequences are that the grantee and funder play a game, they both know it, and neither has an interest in real relationship.

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A lot of trust.

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Trust and understanding are essential to a funding relationship. The funder must trust the organisation to undertake the work they are being supported to do. The funder must understand the work in order to establish if they want to support it.

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Depending on the funding source i.e. Historic charitable or sourced from private benefactors, the Foundations may have skewed or old fashion views of community engagement. This may also be because many Trustees remain for some years and may be out of touch with modern practices or viewpoints.

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There's a high level of trust.

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This particular funder is a really positive model of how funders should be - they trust us to get on with things and show a genuine interest in our work and helping to promote it.

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I think it's very difficult for large funders to understand the needs of every organisation they fund. There has to be a high level of trust involved.

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We have had an excellent relationship with Esmée Fairbairn Foundation who we consider to have model practices as a Foundation compared to many others we have dealt with; we have recommended their approach to making patient investment available to others such as AIF (NESTA) based on the scrupulous but relational and genuinely partner based approach. Esmée has consistently shown high levels of trust towards us having done due diligence at the outset and it briefs and engages its own trustees really effectively in decision making processes. Communications have been consistently conducted in a really mature way; information gathering is designed in a helpful way and we feel we can be very candid with the Foundation about problems we may face and seek their opinion and advice if necessary. So our most recent and most important experience has been outstanding; we wish ACE would learn from Esmée.

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Funders rarely take a holistic view of an organisation and the benefit it provides to its community/society overall. Too project-focused to see the bigger picture, and too focused on project outcomes to see that sometimes just trying to help is important (not every intervention can succeed for the hardest to reach).

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The funder put in a lot of work prior to the application being made to ensure they understood the organisation, its beneficiaries, and the proposed work.

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I think there is a difference in trust depending on the funder. Some smaller local funders have shown distrust, where other larger national funders have helped us to meet their criteria, asked additional questions etc. to get the best from us.

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I feel that there are Trusts out there who do not have websites, with closed processes or with dynastic trustees which are still holding firm to a founding cause that may not be relevant or appropriate many years after the Foundation was set up. I feel that there needs to be a professionalisation of funding, just as there is a current professionalisation of fundraising, to ensure that there is equality among funding opportunities, that certain influences are not unduly pushed onto arts organisations, and a wholly open approach to cultural democracy through the funding landscape.

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I think that there are significant power dynamics at play. Generally organisations want to attract more funding and funders want to fund successful projects. There is therefore likely to be a bit of whitewashing going on in reporting. I think if funders were more willing to learn (rather than just withdraw funding) when things don't go well then organisations could be more open and the relationship would be more productive. There needs to be trust that the funding will not just get withdrawn if the organisation is totally honest about what is and isn't working.

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Many funders fund have such broad areas that they will fund it makes it impossible to get your message across as they will have no understanding of what you do.

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Questions are difficult to answer because you can't generalise across funders. We have one really good one. As someone who has set up Foundations and other funders and who operates on the side, and teaches the topic, it never ceases to amaze me how bad communication is, and therefore trust.

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There is a spectrum here: modest, engaged funders who subordinate process to purpose and are open to new ways of doing things with meet beneficiaries at the centre and funders who are supercilious, run processes to suit themselves and whose practices embody their own

patronage. The funded have become complicit in this and their victim like behaviour is as great a problem as the behaviours of funders.

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We are used to having more regular contact with statutory funders and so we try to maintain communication with charitable Trusts who have given us larger grants but we rarely get any response or engagement. Sometimes we suspect that because we are not in London we don't get the same levels of engagement that London-based funded organisations might enjoy but that may not be the case.

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I think that the relationship is more often one-sided. We (the organisation) start out having a better understanding of the funders requirements, desires and goals. If the relationship is long standing, 3 or more years then this tends to balance out. With regard to trust this is difficult to articulate as I have found genuine trust in the funder/grantee relationship quite rare and most likely to occur when a funder sees the value of the work for beneficiaries and is drawn to building the capacity of the organisation and/or individuals to ensure continuity of the work being delivered.

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There are high levels of trust I think between the two organisations. I think it would enable better relationships if the funder were able to visit the work in action rather than just receive reports.

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Where we have found the relationship between ourselves and the funder to be most useful is when true partnership working has happened and we are able to communicate clearly expectations and values from both parties.

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We regularly invite funders to events to meet beneficiaries - they rarely turn up but don't give us feedback on the type of event that might interest them.

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Many funders have little interaction with us aside from the grant application and report, despite us often reaching out to meet them or inviting them to witness the projects they fund.

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We would probably not tell a funding organisation if we had a problem with their practices in order to avoid damaging the funding relationship. The only reason we would do so is if we were unable to meet their expectations in some way e.g. if they required statistics that we were unable to provide.

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The funder upon whom I have based my responses was particularly process orientated. Other funders would have performed better on the rating scale!

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Levels of trust are good with our funders. Levels of understanding vary depending on the way different funders work. Sometimes it's difficult to know how much information or of what type funders are interested in. Funders have a unique view because they will be learning from a range of providers, I'm sure more could be done with this learning, including sharing with providers.

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I think Esmée Fairbairn has a good level of understanding about what organisations are seeking to achieve.

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There will always be a misalignment in interests pre-empting trust due to the need for organisations to maintain their position as a 'good grantee' as they have an interest in receiving continuation funding. Understanding is more important and openness to meetings/better communication.

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Grant terms are consistently too short and shortsighted. We work with Foundations that we have built substantial trust and respect, and yet we still spend energy and resources and uncertainty renewing grants every 18 months.

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We believe that most grants officers do not have direct experience of working in the charitable sector or of fundraising. This is certainly the case when it comes to smaller charities.

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I am obviously coming from the point of view of a fundraiser, but (and this is a generalisation), I would say that funders should be more willing to, and work together with charities, to trust and understand that charities often know what is best for their beneficiaries because they have extensive experience of working with them and supporting them. Too often I have worked with Trusts and Foundations who want to force their way of working onto the charities they support, but without accepting that to do so will need more investment and more time. Trusts and Foundations I have worked with often encourage charities to 'apply for what they need', but then when it comes down to it, and after many weeks and months spent putting an application together and describing how a project works, they will choose to fund another project because it simply reaches more people at a lower cost. I don't think this represents a great level of trust between funders and charities; it would be of much more value to the charity if a funder could be open and upfront about what they think is likely to create a barrier to the two organisations working together.

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Trust obviously builds over time but I do think there are opportunities for building greater understanding between funders and fundees during the application process.

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Every Trust is different so hard to generalise if you are in receipt of grants from several. Our experience is that greater the trust and openness means better return on investment and better outcomes for participants in programmes. You need to be able to talk about what is not working and why and to learn from this and improve.

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Useful to have a funder who allows flexibility and freedom with funding, particularly with political or advocacy based projects where

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the external parameters can change quickly and there is a need for a project change to accommodate this.

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We try and do anything we can to please the funder, sometimes at the detriment to our own work.

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I am not sure about the extent to which the knowledge/trust that does exist goes beyond the particular individual we deal with.

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Relationships with our funders are very positive. What might appear to be negative responses are coloured by other factors e.g. Practicality.

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This so depends on the funder - with some (and not necessarily those who have been funding us for a long time) we have very high levels of trust and understanding, with others it is much lower. Some want to know everything about us (to a sometimes over-the-top level) and others really don't (one of our recent funders who gave us a considerable amount of funding actively declined a copy of our newsletter).

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Some funders are excellent, such as Esmée Fairbairn, who have kept in good contact and are open ended, so allow projects to develop according to the need we find on the ground. Other Foundations are very prescriptive about what they want and so communication about any issues that arise can be difficult because, ultimately, we don't want to lose our funding.

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I think that the relationship between an organisation and its funders varies greatly funder to funder. Some funders are extremely involved in what you do, the impact made, regularly encourage an open dialogue between the two organisations. Other funders are much more hands off and only want to see the impact of the project once it is finished.

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It's often difficult to develop trust and understanding with funders when the opportunities to build a relationship are quite limited.

Personal contact is vital for this but the framework within which both charities and funders are working often doesn't allow much time for this.

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Levels are very high where there is a close relationship with very good communications.

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The best funders are those that not only give funding but funders who give training and get involved in the organisation and its programme. This builds ownership for the funder and can help to create a much stronger and sustainable programme.

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They trust that we are delivering the work that they are funding and they show understanding of targets sometimes not being met due to circumstances beyond our control (recruitment issues/staff sickness).

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As money has got tighter and competition has increased funders have become less trusting and much more pedantic.

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I think trust and understanding would build if funders were more able to meet with our organisation face to face and experience the work that we are doing.

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We have multiple funders - Trusts and Foundations have high levels of trust in ourselves to deliver and compared to lottery and government funders have light touch application and monitoring requirements showing high levels of trust to deliver as per application.

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The higher levels of trust and communication the more effective the impact of the funding and this must be key to the time and resources expended.

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Funders have a difficult task in managing multiple relationships. I don't perceive a lack of trust but more a lack of time and resource to develop specific understanding of my organisation.

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There will always be an unequal relationship between funded and funder, rather like a child and parent. The objective should be to make that relationship as healthy, communicative, honest and authentic as possible.

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It seems that many funders are so overwhelmed with applications and awards that they only have time for the bare minimum as needed for administration, which means no time for getting to know us or learning about us.

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Good levels of trust and understanding, though work needed on ensuring that the expectation levels in terms of monitoring and evaluation are realistic and in line with our aims.

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My organisation does not have funders (we are funded by small-level public donations) so none of the questions in Section 2 are applicable. We operate solely as a grant funder, providing financial support to other charities and non-profits.

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Trust has to be built over time. Funders try to be overly prescriptive when we start working together on what needs to be delivered. However, after a period of three to five years the Dundee trusts us enough to let us design and deliver in the way we think best for our operational delivery and our beneficiaries.

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Strategically, we look to work with funders on the basis of long term partnerships, so the relationship is often key. Active/successful stewardship of these relationships are based on developing trust and understanding.

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Levels of trust become stronger if the funding is on-going. The longer the funding period, the greater the chance for stronger communication between both sides.

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It is difficult when you have multiple funders. Obviously if a Trust is giving 20k then that is significant to them and they want a strong relationship with the organisation, but you may be juggling several funders of these size all with different requirements, it can be very hard to keep them all happy.

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I am a fundraiser working with different organisations. I think a level of caution still remains on the part of charities to admit problems, delays, etc. to funded projects. I have also experienced unhelpful reactions from funders to 'honest' explanations of the same. It is often difficult for Foundations and their trustees to find time to visit charities' events, or to accept invitations, especially if they are not currently funding them. Charities would benefit from some direction from Foundations on the best way to inform them and build understanding of their work, before a grant funding relationship begins.

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Funders rely on outcomes and impact reporting and when they see continuous 'numbers-up' they seem to consider that the organisation is working so trustworthy. I think too much pressure is put on numerical outcomes when soft outcomes often have more impact in the long term.

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There need to be clear lines of communication and transparency in both grant criteria and service/impact delivery.

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We have worked with funders for many years, so trust and understanding is high.

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It would be better if our funders worked more closely with us to understand us more fully and therefore provide more effective funds.

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Trust and understanding is the basis of any relationship between an organisation and its funders. As an organisation we try to be as transparent as possible and engage our funders with our beneficiaries. However, many Trusts and Foundations do not have the administrative

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capacity to engage directly with the beneficiaries and have to trust the organisation to deliver public benefits and to let the funders know by means of reports and updates on how their money is being spent.

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Very much depends on the funder. Some are very engaged, knowledgeable and collaborative, others rule out whole sectors (environment charities) as 'not relevant to people' or 'just animal charities' without any interest in engaging.

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Levels of trust vary considerably between funders. We work with a huge range from those that have funded us over the years to one-off funders and corporate funders. We have to work with them to deliver for us and them. Some of them convert into long term funders, others want to fund project specific work and do not necessarily understand the need to fund infrastructure costs.

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Opportunities for communicating with funders are incredibly limited and tend to be focused on the project at hand. There is so much information we could share with funders. If we know the change they hope to achieve in the world, we can make sure we can give them the most relevant and suitable information for their trustees.

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The funder I am thinking of is excellent, highly regarded and in many ways very professional. All the London based organisations they fund speak very highly of their involvement, regular visits etc. But in a three year grant of around £100k we haven't had a single visit - despite being <2 hours train ride away. I think the feeling that, whilst there is mutual regard between us and the funder, there isn't a close relationship of trust and mutual ambition is largely down to the lack of face-to-face contact we've had.

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Too much geared to big national charities now and too little to local charities for local people.

## £6m to £10m

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Different levels of funder have different levels of trust and understanding.

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This is a highly engaged relationship which often operates as a partnership with projects jointly explored and initiated. There are lots of benefits to this but it does mean that the funders agenda can occasionally drive the direction of the work more than us as a charity or the beneficiaries.

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Our funder likes to fund 'pathfinder' projects which is particularly helpful for new work without significant partners yet; and they will fund core costs/salaries as that is crucial to growth in many initial specialist services.

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Funders should trust organisations with a strong track record and understand the requirement for core funding to be able to provide flexible services that best meet needs.

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Financial information is often difficult to express properly on forms and this can delay the process and create some sense of mistrust/ misunderstanding.

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I think that there is a perceived power imbalance between funders and organisations which does not always foster an open and honest dialogue about setbacks. There is a fear that funding will be withheld.

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It is important to research the project before applying for a grant and then match the funder to the project - talk to the potential funder before applying as this helps to save time on both sides.

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There is always room for negotiation when it comes to 'understanding'; and 'trust' is only ever built over a period of time. Both are subject to the natural power relations between funder and recipient. It could be said that there will always be a certain level of disconnect between the two - but that's where negotiation comes in, with a hope that



funders are open to it. Because conception of a project and the actual delivery always throws up unexpected challenges and outcomes - learning from what doesn't work is most useful. Funders need to 'trust' organisations to learn.

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I think that there is a transparent relationship between funder and organisation.

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There is more open communication between funders and charities these days.

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Any trust that we share between ourselves and the funder has been built through our efforts to do so.

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This is a small local Trust and two of the trustees have visited us and are very supportive of our work. I would be very confident that I could speak to one of the trustees in particular and I also believe they could voice any concerns with us. We report back each year on their contribution.

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All understanding and trust is driven through written communications, there is no real opportunity to build either through personal communication.

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## Over £10m

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The levels of trust & understanding have greatly increased following occasional breakfast meetings between me and the CEO of the Foundation. While my organisation has always been respected for delivery, its role in coordinating partners and strategy were probably not understood.

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This can vary greatly. It's great when funders come to visit, they are much more likely to understand what we do which can be hard to put into words. However visits are rare, most funders just don't have the time.

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The main limiting factor here is the time funders have available for each of their grantee organisations. We always feel that as Trusts/ Foundations are so busy we have to be careful with what they are invited to and how much information we can share.

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Some funders operate at a distance. As a charity we do our best to map our Theory of change with that of the funder. Only to be offered zero feedback when unsuccessful. Not an equitable relationship.

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The Blagrave Trust is an incredibly open, transparent and understanding funder. Having a warm relationship with them means that, when confusions arise (juggling multiple grants with competing deadlines, these come up a bit!) I feel completely comfortable in calling Jo and talking to her, solving any issues in a mutually beneficial way.

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It's a 50-50 two-way relationship that we both need to work at and honesty and trust is key.

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As a funder with fellow funders co-investing in an innovative programme that we are delivering, relationships are great. As for the beneficiary conversation, it is not typical with this specific programme as it is predicated on reaching 'cold' areas.

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From my experience very few funders understand our organisation beyond the words written in a grant proposal/application. I also think the same is true the other way. I think fundraisers research a funder to the point of understanding if the project will meet the funder's objectives/criteria but do not go beyond that. I think both parties are guilty of not spending the time trying to get to truly understand the other and so the trust between both is at a very low level. A school report for both parties would read 'could do better'.

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We work with many funders. For the funder I am thinking of as I write this survey levels of trust and understanding are high. Other funders are more remote.

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It varies as we do not have just one funder. I would hope funders trust us as funding wouldn't be forthcoming if they didn't

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Trust and understanding could be improved from both sides. This requires meetings with staff at the right level. Sometimes these meetings are only conducted at a very senior level with people not involved in the delivery of the project. In my experience Foundations are reluctant to meet to discuss the projects and then try to impose conditions incompatible with delivery without discussion.

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The funder's guidelines are clearly understood and our organisation's mission, goals, achievements and finances are clearly set out, along with clear details of what we are requesting funds for, and how we plan to monitor/evaluate/report if funds are granted. We are a well-established charity with longstanding partnerships in Africa and with a track record of effective project delivery and reporting, all of which is communicated to the donor.

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Our funder trusts us to deliver what we have promised and has been very understanding through communication that we have initiated over project problems. We are very aware that we will be held accountable at the end of the project through our reporting, and will have to justify the trust that the funder has placed in our organisation. No organisation should be given blanket trust, but it is good to see that trust being built up over years of a strong relationship, which engenders more trust and understanding on both sides.

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As a hybrid organisation, whose charitable turnover is a small part of overall turnover, I find that many funders do not want to understand that this makes us a medium charity. All they want to see is the £80m turnover that classifies us as a large charity and prevents us from applying.

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## What would you most like your funder to do in order to improve their relationship with you in the future?

### £10k to £100k

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Do more linking up with other charities (especially those working in very different fields), other funders, policy organisations, media etc.!

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Let us know when their decision making committee is due to meet.

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### £100k to £1m

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Make monitoring appropriate to the size of the grant.

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Visit projects being funded and see what difference their funding is making on the ground. Occasionally organisations can feel anonymous to large funding bodies.

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Communicate why proposals are rejected, or what they do like about a project but cannot fund. Also have a short initial application process to ensure time is not wasted by applicants.

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Work with other funders to streamline the fundraising process and make it efficient/easier for charities. Also adopt an evidence-based approach to funding, not just fund based on ideology or nepotism.

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This varies from funder to funder - there isn't one answer.

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Communicate regularly.

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Support us in our new adventures where we both recognise innovation, and the risk that comes with that. Innovation and new ideas are mostly stifled due to a funding system that doesn't support it in reality.

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Communicate with us about others they are planning to fund.

## £1m to £5m

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Simplify processes and understand our pressures.

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When making a grant to ask what reporting is already in place for the project - and agree to receive the same reports at the same time.

## £6m to £10m

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Discuss options after the grant ends.

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This particular funder is a positive experience. However, with other funders, often they say they do not fund salaries, however, we are a hospice and that is where most of our funds raised are spent. Clinical staff, etc.

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## In general, does your funder's practice encourage your organisation to compete or collaborate with its peers and potential partners?

### £10k to £100k

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Our current funders have not made us compete or collaborate; but we found that when we made a (failed) application to the lottery they completely failed to understand what we do, how we do it and why collaboration would have not been in our favour as we are too small and peer-led, and others are not.

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Too often 'opportunities' to collaborate looks like the funder wanting fewer applications so they don't have to make hard choices. Sector organisations are continually asked to both compete and collaborate with the same organisations - what other sector is asked to do this?

### £100k to £1m

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Generally no although one funder does.

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Both.

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It's shifting towards more collaboration.

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Both.

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Both.

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We know as an organisation that funders like collaboration due to lack of money and sector reputation for not being strategic. We would consider collaboration for this reason as well as the right one - to be more strategic! The work that goes

into this new partnership building costs, so it would be great to speak with the funder earlier on in the process.

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It inevitably leads to competition – but with some funders collaboration is well promoted.

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They often force collaboration even when it's not right for the work.

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Both.

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Our funders encourage collaboration, but without understanding that there are fundamental barriers to making this happen and successful. Just because you have 4 arts organisations, doesn't mean they should be collaborating.

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Dependant on who potential partner is and their approach to genuine partnership working.

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## £1m to £5m

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Both.

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Sometimes we do both. The difficulty around constantly collaborating, is as an arts organisation support from funders isn't always project based (which is more appropriate for collaborative funding). The real lack of support is in core costs. We will collaborate on applications if we think that we would be more successful in the end with the ask, but collaborations also come with a lot of back end of work and one organisation doing more than the other (or not bringing equal funding to the table).

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I think funders genuinely want us to collaborate but don't allow grant making to reflect the real short-term costs involved in that.

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## Does your funder share anything with your organisation apart from money?

### £10k to £100k

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Examples of funding awarded.

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We were funded by UnLtd and that included invaluable business development support.

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### £100k to £1m

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Funders offer wrong kind of in kind support, often requirement to accept this 'support'.

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Access to meeting rooms.

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Office space.

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Limited information only from their website.

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Some of all the above, but is rarely our primary source.

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Room bookings and trainings.

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Some small amounts of knowledge.

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Meeting spaces.

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A meeting room where we convene sector leaders - this is invaluable and much appreciated.

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Depends on the funder – but mostly just money.

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## £1m to £5m

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Space in kind.

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Potential support with external evaluation funding.

## Over £10m

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I'm new to managing this relationship, so have not had call to ask for anything from The Blagrove Trust - yet - but judging by how warm we are to them, I would imagine that should I ask, they'd be happy to give.

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It depends on the situation.

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Friendship.

## Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

### Under£10k

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Be open to new innovative charities not same old especially when missions not being achieved.

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There are no funders, only three trustees who administer the charity. We are a registered charity.

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Our relationship is dependent on this one person and is a success because of her positive attitude towards the local community. Sometimes she is under pressure from a new manager to shift her focus and there are periods where she will be removed from community work and placed back on the shop floor because there is a new manager with a different focus. As a large organisation there does not seem to be a clear strategy.

### £10k to £100k

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In an era of rapid and radical change, the aspect of work which is unfunded is the developmental period of building trust with organisations and other partners. Without this trust being established it is impossible to gather specific enough information to provide content for project applications. This period of development merits consideration as a field for funding. In Japanese, there is a horticultural term: Nemawashi, which means digging around the roots of a plant before you transplant it. I would like Foundations to consider how they might institute Nemawashi grants to individuals with something of a track record of good practice.

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Community Foundations generally do not support total cost recovery – this is unsustainable for small local charities and disrespectful of organisational needs.

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I would find it helpful to know about the criteria against which an application is being judged. I also worry that as a nation a large part of our social policy is being determined by a small group of people, probably people who have access to money and resources. I think it's really important that funders listen to charities and value their ongoing work instead of always wanting new projects or new developments. We operate some strong core services but it is can be difficult to fund these services. I put in a huge amount of time in addition to what I am paid for to ensure funding bids get written, and sometimes I feel like I don't know if what I am doing is going to hit the mark. I find it quite soul destroying, I took the job to deliver a service but find myself spending more and more time trying to get funding.

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Small organizations – less than £50K – are the most hit by austerity and competition. Need support for ALL basic running costs, not just a small percentage, to be sustainable. Too often, having to do a short-term project or several to survive. No chance to be strategic.

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I have worked with several different organisations and funders and funders do vary. I have never known one communicate with our beneficiaries. It would be most helpful for funders to acknowledge the resource required in preparing bids, sometimes including extensive consultation and analysis and the expertise required to deliver this and to look at how they can support this in the interest of funding projects that are responsive and most likely to be effective thus meaning that their funds will be well-directed.

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Writing grant applications is the most soul destroying and pointless waste of resources a charity can do. The problem is, how can you function without them? Of course if you hit the jack-pot it's worth all the effort, but with odds getting longer and longer and Trusts being

swamped by applications, it seems it would be better to spend all your reserves on buying lottery tickets!

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If you multiply all the small charities across the country chasing the same small pots of money; well, I hate to think of all the hours, resources and ultimately cash that is wasted on grant applications.

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There's got to be a better way than this.

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As someone who runs a charity and is on the board of a Trust that gives out small grants I like to think I have an insight into both sides of the coins. In fact it wouldn't do grant givers any harm for their staff to do some work experience at a small charity to understand the problems and some of the over the top demands they and councils make.

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I recently spoke to one organisation, asking if it is worth us applying for their pot of gold. I said that we fitted all the criteria perfectly, but as a small charity without many admin resources, needed an idea of our chances. Come to our one day seminar I was told. But that's the point: I haven't got time to come to a bloody one day seminar in London!

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So here's a few steps grant givers can do to make things more bearable (and they're not exactly rocket science).

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Make forms as simple as possible.

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Make the guidelines as clear as possible.

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Speak English! It took me ages to figure out what an 'outcome' was.

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Forms seem to get more demanding. Is this necessary? How many hoops do you really need to make people jump through? How do you know that you aren't just giving the money to those who can write the best bids or know the right people?

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Why not have a two phase application process, asking for just a few paragraphs to see if the charity has a cat in hell's chance of getting any money in the first place, before they waste lots of hours.

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Stop funding only new projects. Surely it shows success (or should I say 'sustainability') if a charity has been going for a number of years. So fund core costs and boring but essential stuff like insurance, rent and wages.

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But probably most importantly give feedback if an application is turned down.

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It's not acceptable to ask organisations to write pages and pages, budget forecasts and how much they spend on loo paper and then tell people that you don't have the capacity to say why you didn't give them any money.

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I don't want our charity to rely on grants and we have doing our best to increase our income to nearly 50% of our turnover. We try to get support from sympathetic business and supporters ('diversify'). However, the nature of the work means we will probably always have to rely on some grant funding which is probably more fool us.

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But how much more 'effective' would we be if all this precious time was spent doing what we were set out to do in the first place. There's nothing about sitting in front of a computer screen in our 'aims and objectives'.

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So when I sit down to another application, making sure we fit all the guidelines, I can't help thinking of that Einstein quote that insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.

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It's time for a major rethink.

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I see these things starting to improve certainly with our current funders so I think things are moving in the right direction.

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Have found Foundation funders to be empowering and helpful; whereas lottery was too big a machine and not appreciative of the burden they were placing on smaller charities like us i.e. the process was overwhelming.

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Small funders that demand completion of a six page form and lots of additional documentation for a grant of £1000 drive me bananas. The application should be proportional to the funds!

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Our current funder is generally too busy to really engage on an individual basis with our organisation. We are only small so we're just a 'blip' on their radar.

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Our organisation and the high impact work we have been able to do would have been impossible without the deep understanding and unswerving flexibility of charitable Foundations.

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Some projects are big and complex. Normal funding routes are not always the solution and a more collaborative, strategic approach is required to lever, more significant and better quality outcomes.

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Our founders [funders] have been extremely understanding about our capacity and that we are small. Demands from them seem to take this into account.

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It would help if more funders could collaborate over core content/ questions in application forms and impact measurement and reporting requirements.

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As a racial justice, civil liberties and human rights charity the availability of funding pots for these areas of work are almost non-existent. There appears to be an increasing tendency for

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charitable funders to align their priorities to the government agenda. Charitable funders can play a more proactive role in challenging the government's failure to support the 3rd sector and work to show how we deliver value for money in a way that private providers are unable to. Unfortunately charitable funders have not been effective as advocates for the 3rd/voluntary sector and the lack of champions has led to the demise of organisations that had been delivering to excluded, marginalised and impoverished communities.

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Dedicated individuals within funding organisations developing a more personal relationship with partner organisations.

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Organisations should always have a point of contact and be able to communicate openly.

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It's very hard to try to improve the relationship from the position of the people applying for funds. We don't want to rock the boat, we need to play by the funders rules, we generally feel in the subservient position. I am heartened by this survey and hope we can shift the dynamic to really work more collaboratively.

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Time consuming applications which a disproportionate to the funds applied for and a high handed refusal to discuss how we might better meet criteria are both very frustrating.

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The term 'partnership' is being used by different funders in different ways and by different people in the same organisations in different ways. I suspect that, for some people, the requirement for organisations to work in 'partnership' is really a plea for the sector to make the decisions about who should be funded before applying, so that funders don't have to. If you really want to share decision-making that would be great but you need to do it openly and resource the sector to participate.

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We trust our fundees. We ask for a report. Any other behaviour would be unworkable.

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## £100k to £1m

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We are trying to move into collaborative working across the sector, and would like to see funders follow and foster this kind of approach.

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Experience with this particular funder is negative but with most funders it is very positive.

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We are a small charity that receives funding from 60+ funders of various sizes each year. The monitoring requirements for these grants vary wildly from funder to funder, meaning we report back different information to different funders in different depth at different times of the year - which in some instances can take a disproportionate amount of time compared to the grant given. We collect all the monitoring information required: but re-packaging it time after time in slightly different formats is draining. Finally, as I'm sure you know, it remains fiercely difficult for small organisations to raise core costs funding.

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As a junior fundraiser with a pressured role, one area in which I feel very strongly is that of the many hundreds of thousands of charitable Trusts operating in the UK today - those smaller ones who don't have a website or a dedicated member of staff. All charitable Trusts need to be registered on the charity commission yes, however the amount and depth of information provided by these Trusts varies between nothing and everything. Of course I understand that some Trusts simply do not have the resources to have a fancy website and a phone number. However I do think something can be done - possibly a minimum amount of information which Trusts must provide - something more than the current 'arts/culture/heritage/science' and 'operates throughout England and Wales.' This is especially true of those Trusts based in London who state that they will support organisations country-wide but when you look at their accounts, 90% of grantees are based in London. You may say, well, just don't apply. But it's about more than that - to be a grant-making body, you are positioned to do great amounts of good yes, but you are also effectively in a position from which to 'make charities use vital organisational resources'

which for very small charities may mean someone working late at night, weekends, desperately trying to get a project funded. I think we have a serious problem in this country where organisations are being forced to use precious time and resources writing proposal after proposal to countless Trusts because they don't have enough information to choose those most likely to support them.

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Overall it has been quite difficult to answer these questions as we have more than one funding organisation and each behaves very differently.

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Not sure why a funder should be expected to be accountable to anyone but their founders/trustees.

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Would like to see more collaboration that supports the charities wider objectives rather than emphasis on discreet pieces of work as they do not happen in isolation, 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts'.

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It really depends on the funder - they can be very different from each other.

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We are funded at present by a multitude of Foundations and Trusts. How is answering about one of them going to give you a useful picture about current practice? SOME funders give more than money; SOME encourage collaboration etc. etc. But more so, there are some general similarities among Foundations run by staff teams and family Foundations run by a small group of trustees drawn from one or two families etc. And it obviously makes a complete difference in terms of communications whether you are thinking of making an application or are making an application or whether you are a grantee - and what makes good communication is quite different for these 2 scenarios. - Also, our income is around £150k which is VASTLY different from an organisation with an income of £1 million.

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Core funding from Foundations is essential to charities providing vital public services.

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It's great that Foundations are asking for clear project outcomes, but some Foundations are expecting highly complex reporting and receipts for every little expense; this creates a feeling of distrust, and takes charities away from delivering vital work.

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There is too little for some unpopular causes. Sometimes funders need to take more risks.

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I would like funders to accept essential work may need continuing support and not always be of the 'project' kind with defined time limits.

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Blagrove have supported a step change for Extratime.

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I think it depends on the nature of the project and funding how involved a Foundation will be and what support they would offer.

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Not all funders offer more than money. Lloyd's bank Foundation do this very well.

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Training/meeting rooms.

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I feel that funders do have much more knowledge and expertise they can share with organisations. They could also link the organisations they are funding closer together.

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In general I like funders that do not demand too much in terms of up front information about specific outcomes when projects are community led/emergent, and/or include levels of complexity or uncertainty that don't allow accurate predictions, either of specific outcomes or sometimes even the direction that the project will take. In order to be trusted in this way, the delivering organisation must demonstrate a genuine excellent track record of producing good outcomes and of the having the necessary skills and experience. Otherwise projections tend to be based more on guesswork and produced simply because they have to be.



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I think that the philanthropic sector is holding back charities in achieving their goals – it's a sad reality. The role of funder ego fuels inter-charity and inter-funder competition; a refusal to streamline applications creates unnecessary work for charities; and an emphasis on funding 'near-desperate' charities means we are left with a mindset of scarcity, which isn't healthy for us or for our beneficiaries. The funders are KEY to the health and progress of charities and social justice, and I'm happy to hear you're conducting this review, because the philanthropic sector should adjust.

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It makes it increasingly difficult that funders do not provide feedback of why an application has been unsuccessful. This would really be beneficially for future funding bids, it takes a lot of time to put together an application so to then not know why it wasn't accepted is extremely frustrating and time consuming.

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We need to do something to improve how funding works and how Foundations invest in the communities around them. I wonder if the amount of time and effort the UK's staff and volunteers spend filling in application forms and gathering different data to report in different ways to different funders to fuel the current funding system is the best use of their time. There must be a better way of doing it. Us humans are a brilliant, clever, inventive lot and it must be possible to do it better. If we were designing this from scratch, I doubt we would end up with the same system.

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I think the variety of practice is such that, with different Foundations in mind, I could have answered all the above questions differently. Something I would generally highlight is that I have been fundraising from charities and Foundations for over 20 years. 20 years ago the average size of annual grant from a large Foundation was 20-30k – this is still the same despite the fact that 20 years ago this could fund more than one post, now it barely funds a part time member of staff.

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It is very difficult to sustain really good projects when many funders only want to fund new projects.

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A funder has helped us initiate a working group amongst peers around evaluation and impact measurement, enabling us to take the lead in our sector.

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It can be hard to provide the target information that many funders want.

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I would like to see funders invest more money into building capacity in organisations and the sector through funding T&D opportunities, from funding professional qualifications, to learning sets, to 1 day conference events to listen to leaders in their field.

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I would like to funders to see the impact themselves and visit the beneficiaries but guess it is a time lilted thing.

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We need to promote what we are doing so we can reach others in need, money is needed to continue successful projects as we have built relationships and truly supporting people to make positive changes – these projects need to continue and retain the expertise – most funders will only fund new projects, this is so damaging to staff, organisations and vulnerable people needing help.

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As the voluntary sector needs to adapt to the changes of the needs of our clients so do the Foundations. Some do this very well, some of in the process and some sadly, do not see the need to change.

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Funders should act like investors in impact. They shouldn't be seeking out grantees to act as subcontractors of a highly defined mission that the funder decides – even if this mission is created in consultation. Funders should be clear about the outcomes they care most about, and then using the grant making process to seek the most credible strategies for achieving that impact at scale, selecting the right

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mix of low risk, medium risk and high risk investments for getting there. This would help remove some of the discrete game playing going on, where charities have to create a product or service that they think fits the discrete interests of certain funders. Instead, you would have cash markets for different social outcomes, with all of the entrepreneurialism taking place within those markets. Once a funder has chosen a grantee, they should back the grantee to achieve their chosen mission – acting as an investor with a stake in its success. Our best funders have had grant makers who could essentially join our board, they had that much to offer in terms of how we could succeed better. Our worst funders, or unsuccessful grants, have tended to be funders who had picked out the kind of delivery that they liked and wanted to see more.

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Every funder is totally different. The most frustrating ones are closed, un-transparent, and not humble. They need to find the information just as much as we need to be clear in providing it. Collaboration and face-to-face is key in making true connections, as people still give to people. It would be nice for a funder to understand the sector, the difficulties in fundraising, and aim to want to trust the organisation. Staged applications are great, as are meetups.

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Our funders support our proposals for collaboration, rather than explicitly promoting collaboration.

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The example I used didn't highlight a key concern which is the longevity of Foundation funding. We want to grow as an organisation but the majority of Foundation funding is annual, and regular breaks may be required. It is therefore almost impossible to confidently plan and build programmes, and investing time and money in recruiting and developing staff and volunteers becomes a calculated risk. Very few Foundations (Esmée and Tudor are exceptions) take the time to develop a programme with the charity, working in a true spirit of openness, instead it becomes almost a game of trying to second guess which of our programmes might appeal. However I recognise

that not all Foundations are resourced to deal with applicants at this detailed level.

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It's very difficult to answer generic questions as one of the good things about relationships with funders is that they are all different.

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We work with more than one funder, and whilst practice does not vary greatly there are some key differences between some funders and others, most notably in terms of collaboration and communication.

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There are some funders who engage more directly with their beneficiaries and who bring them together etc. and it is incredibly useful – I could only name one or two who fit this description though.

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We work with a wide range of funders (approximately 25 each year) and the vast majority of our funders, both private and statutory, are flexible, supportive and engaged in our programme, without overreaching.

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It would be so helpful to have the opportunity to influence the areas of concern funders prioritise. For example, so many are concerned with older people's wellbeing but NONE distinguish that older men are at greater risk than older women. Therefore, the majority of organisations involved in older people's wellbeing do nothing to target and adapt their practices to attract and sustain the engagement of older men.

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Feedback on rejections. So important and hardly ever done. Please introduce it as the norm! Fundraisers are only human and we wish to learn from rejections – of which there are many!

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That my experience of Trusts & Foundations is that they staffed by extremely able, thoughtful and committed people – and the relationship is relatively unconflicted. Much, much easier than working with Government or sponsors.

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In the current climate of public sector cuts. Funders will no doubt have a greater demand and a greater role to support organisations like ours

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We are an umbrella organisation that brings together environment charities in the UK. The small number of Foundations that support us understand that key to our survival is securing funding for the salaries and associated costs of our highly skilled and committed staff – not funding for specific projects per se. It would be extremely helpful if more Foundations were to be flexible in their funding approach, recognise the value of directly funding staff, and the difficulties charities face in securing core costs.

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They are brilliant funders.

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There is not much consistency in approach – all funders are different. Some are responsive and open; and others seem enjoy being elusive and not engaging with organisations at all. On some occasions, it has also felt like the funder (or key contact) has almost played games with us – said encouraging things in meetings about applying but then become quiet and unresponsive, then arranging other meetings but sending another person to the meeting, and then after a year+ of effort tells us that they don't want to fund us anymore (it would have saved us a lot of time if they had told us this at the start). Some funders are notorious within our networks of being challenging and elusive to deal with, and have had similar experiences.

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I personally believe that all Foundations should require their recipients to measure and reduce their carbon footprints – in the same way as they require due diligence in all other areas of project management.

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Funders should work together (with other funders) to develop a standard stage one application form covering name, address, charity number, beneficiaries, board numbers, turnover etc. The wasted time filling in the same info over and over and over again is astonishing. Also – funder should get charity staff on their decision-making boards.

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Also – be more open to repeat funding successful projects without demanding 'innovation'. Also – we don't know the answer to 'how will you continue this work at the end of this funding?' – it's naive of you to ask.

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Genuine reciprocity would be appreciated and an acknowledgement that funded organisations hold real expertise and experience. Too often there is a sense of arrogance and a 'we know best' attitude from funders.

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Simple guidelines are one of the most effective ways to support the third sector, especially for smaller organisations which have limited fundraising capacity.

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Guidance on what areas are supported, whether core costs can be requested, and what the funder would like in an application (length, budget, organisational history, rationale, whether to include accounts etc.) Make a difficult job much easier, and much quicker, allowing the beneficiary organisation to focus more resources on delivery.

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There is a big difference between funders. Some are very engaged and place a lot of trust in the funded organisation and actively seek out meetings. Others provide funding and are very supportive but barely make contact. Others make decisions about ending funding which are difficult to understand, or give advice about presentation of information which is also hard to understand.

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We're still learning about working with Trusts and Foundations; we're still developing the structures which will enable us to work more effectively. No Foundation has an obligation to fund you. At the same time, they may be interested in aspects of your work you don't realise. Anything that enables you to put your work in front of them and have more open discussions would be useful. Some Foundations have had regional sessions where you can talk to them about their interests, your work and the possibilities – these are extraordinarily helpful.

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It is also a huge boost to an organisation to receive funding from a trust both in terms of esteem, confidence and leverage.

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I would like them to champion the role of the sector more, especially local, smaller orgs who are at risk of disappearing.

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Slow decision-making, usually by trustees, generates uncertainty and makes it hard to plan.

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Funders vary so much I don't know how I should behave with them - like a colleague, like a friend or like a defence barrister?

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Slight danger of having to be 'innovative' in delivery models and interventions when established services are areas that need continued investment. Monies for infrastructure costs or funding or part funding a post within a project for Quality/Compliance would be really helpful.

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Funders seem to be thinking of creating lots of standalone support structures for the issues which funded organisations present. This may be better done by independent support organisations. It would be good to have more of a dialogue with funders as it is often difficult to spot what funders might be interested in and therefore harder to give precise feedback. Most funders are very good and the differences between funders help create a diverse mix for applicants to choose from. When I think the funder supports our ethos and methods it creates a really positive dynamic.

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Where funders actively support more than one organisation in a sector, they should be more proactive in promoting the services and enabling collaboration to ensure that the programmes supported have a higher chance of success due to the interlinkages between organisations operating in the same space. Nor should they be afraid to encourage consortium or merger of services . . . There are a lot of siloed activities that not everyone is aware of.

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There can also be a lot more shared learning and collaboration between funders.

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We would welcome funders sharing their knowledge in a more structured and formal way. They have a wide range of contacts and opportunities to structure the information they collect and share insights into different parts of the sector - but this does not seem to be done in any formal, transparent way. We would welcome funders being more demanding in the due diligence they carry out with charities, and in using their influence to help charities adopt tools which will help them to manage their organisations, e.g. requesting cashflow forecasts in funding applications to improve financial forecasting in charities.

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We enjoy working with funders, but would like to involve them more closely as partners (not just funders) in ongoing activity. But due to time constraints and the amount of activity they are supporting, this is difficult.

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Without people who care about those less off in life where would we be, you all should be proud to give and work in partnership with us doing the work it's been a mainly positive experience for last 27 years!

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We have one big event a year: it would be really nice if a representative from the funders attended, or if unable to attend, made an active and personal attempt to find out how it went, how we are doing etc., instead of just waiting for us to fill out reports.

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We have a number of funders, and some are better at engaging with us than others. The best offer a two way process which is the most beneficial to us as an organisation as we learn from the funder but also for collaborating with other projects supported by the same funder. This is a good way to challenge the competition element of fundraising where we are inevitably competing for funds with other organisations.

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We have become much less dependent on grant funding in the last two years because we have greatly cut our fixed costs. Oddly, that means that with one exception we no longer have a relationship with funders – for small grants we tend to just get a cheque in the post and no further contact. I feel that with our more than 20 years of experience as a recipient of funding, we could continue to play a useful role in the debate about how to support the 3rd sector.

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We would like to collaborate more with our funders and co-create. Also in a 3-5 year project things change and when they do we would like to be able to discuss it with the funders and make adjustments without being punished or threatened. Which is what sometimes happens. Payment by results contracts also only really favour large organisations who can afford to take the risk. Small ones can't and so miss out.

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I know funders are stretched but individual feedback on applications would be so valuable. We can sometimes spend weeks on applications and then receive generic feedback. This can make it challenging to improve our applications through understanding where our weaknesses/strengths lie.

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## £1m to £5m

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Funders could get more out of grantees and strike more honest relationships if they are open about their strategies, invest in people and organisations rather than projects and programmes, and clearly recognise that failure is common when people are trying to do hard and complex things.

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I have literally never seen a funder own publicly, or even privately, that a piece of work didn't really come off as expected and that that is FINE because a) what we're trying to do is really hard and b) we can learn

from it. Failure is currently toxic – as such grantees are incentivised to play a game rather than enter real relationship.

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Tricky stuff this, good luck!

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Being able to use the support of a funder to leverage other support is extremely useful for organisations.

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Long-term funders should get their trustees to visit at least once the projects that they fund. Normally these are not hundreds of projects funded and so trustees could share this task between them. It would improve their learning and understanding.

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I have answered the section above based on the behaviour of one Trust who has supported us for a long time, who happen to have given most recently. We are supported by many other Trusts who are much less engaged.

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It would be good if the funder could introduce charities that they have funded who might be able to collaborate on projects and share ideas and experience.

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Jumping through administrative hoops/dealing with overlapping funding periods (which are generally totally irrelevant to projects targeting young people still in education)/impossibly short second-stage application windows/onerous reporting requirements for small funding pots/the extreme scarcity of core funding/requiring hard copies of funding applications . . . I could go on.

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We often find it difficult to develop close relationships with funders, who are often very busy and unable to offer us much time.

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It would be good if all funders could be clear about their timescales, how often they meet, when you will hear by and whether or not they give feedback. You can often put a bid in and not hear anything and

you don't know if you've missed the current round, been rejected or are being considered.

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There are frameworks against which funders create grant programmes. It often feels like they are commissioning work not making grants having become so strategic. Electronic systems cannot substitute for dialogue, and they are also barriers to applications. There is a power relationship which isn't equal and which cannot be sorted without people engaging. There is also too much prescription and definition around partnerships, user design and involvement, and not enough understanding of the way the 21st Century is changing the charity sector on the ground. For example, the question below about where is your organisation based we can tick all the boxes! We have ticked but it doesn't really reflect reality. And I feel this questionnaire is part of the problem so to speak.

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We have several funders from different sources and our most successful support comes from those who understand our vision and do not ask us to change our identity in order to provide the services agreed.

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Funders have enormous knowledge and reach to charities - it would be good to work on sharing that jointly, with other funded projects, to encourage collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

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I feel there is a strong culture of Foundations favouring personal connections - certainly people their trustees have met with. This is understandable but difficult to contend with when access to these meetings is not regulated or universal and depends on who you know.

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It is best if funders discuss plans and arrive at an agreed position - this makes it easier to understand what the funder wants.

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The charity sector would benefit from Foundations encouraging partnership work through funding. It would make us more effective and efficient for our beneficiaries.

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Funders have unrealistic expectations from organisations during the development stage of projects. There is an expectation that every single element of the project can be defined and will remain the same for the duration of the project. The reality is that we live in a dynamic world and things do change.

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Generally speaking, and it's an age old issue, funders need to have a more open, understanding a researched approach to full cost recovery so that charities feel able to apply to them for funding to deliver projects that still enable them to cover their full costs. There is definitely still an attitude amongst funders that overheads/full cost recovery can be seen as 'too high' very easily, and whilst I understand it is important to benchmark similar charities' overheads against others in some situations, in most this is not helpful and not a good way to judge a charity's funding request.

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Some funders are providing increasing levels of pro bono support which is great to see.

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Given pressure on resources the two tier approach some trusts take of an outline and conversations and then a detailed bid if there is interest seems to be a good model. Having a relationship as well as funding is great.

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Core funding is the most crucial support yet most difficult to find. There should be more focus on trusting the charity to spend money wisely to get greatest impact. Funding from charitable Foundations tends to focus on new projects and 'innovation' meaning existing and evidenced work is unsustainable.

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The overall relationships with our funders are good, in some instances excellent; in others they would benefit from a coherent agreed longer-term strategy to which we both commit.

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We have multiple funders, as do most organisations, but this questionnaire asks about 'your funder' which makes it difficult to respond, given that they behave differently.

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The questions here are very difficult to answer in a meaningful way as there are such stark differences between funders. In general the thing that would be most helpful would be for more funders to fund core costs (and to understand why this is so important), and for more to engage in a much more sophisticated conversation about what sustainability really means.

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Also the wording of the initial questions wasn't clear, re accountability. Do you mean they are currently accountable, or they should be accountable i.e. To their funders.

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At times we seem to be competing with our funders for the same pot of money.

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Foundations range in size and scope and all operate in different ways so there is no one size fits all approach, but generally speaking it would better if decision making process and criteria were clearer with details provided about what projects are supported and where which would help applicants to the benefit of all. Foundations could use projects more to promote their work, sharing information in their marketing and communications, developing networks of funded projects and encouraging great projects to work together and learn from each other.

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Completing this survey has been difficult because we only have one Foundation funder (Esmée Fairbairn Foundation) at the moment and we don't believe they are typical of the sector (we feel they are best in class). Our answers are therefore perhaps more positive than they would be if the questions were about our perception of the rest of the sector.

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We are funded by a range of funders from small family charities awarding grants of £1k to large national funders awarding 5-year £500k grants, so this survey has been hard to complete - using our most recent funder as an example is utterly unrepresentative of our wider experience, and giving generic answers would be almost impossible since experiences vary so wildly. Ironically this survey is, therefore, itself representative of many of the problems experienced when trying to work and communicate with funders!

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Back and forth with funders is often extremely helpful to iteratively develop both funding bids and operational activities.

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I would like funders to be less project led and to consider core funding more readily. I would like funders to rely less on 'innovation' and maybe be more considerate of scaling up services that already have a positive impact.

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We have a broad range of funders, none of whom have consistent practices. Everyone is unique and demanding in its own way.

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We would welcome closer relationships and more support from funders.

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HUGE variation between different funders.

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The sector faces a tough time and in order to provide a sustainable future, it needs to review its work and how it delivers activities within a financially sustainable and viable operating environment. Funders needs to help us with infrastructure costs which will enable us to future proof the sector in order to carry on the valuable work it does in meeting needs in our communities.

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Based on 15 years' experience in Trust and grant fundraising I have seen that applying for and reporting on funding takes significant amounts of front-line staff time. For many staff, communicating about

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their work in writing is a big task and takes a significant amount of time. If this administration can be reduced, front-line staff will have more time and feel less pressure. This could be done in a number of simple ways: Having a simple call for proposals from interested organisations – one sentence summary and link to accounts/website. Limited to the first 50 or 100 responses. Choose a small number of organisations and shape the relationship to minimise impact on front-line staff. For reporting, perhaps just copies of the organisational internal reporting, copies of reports to be sent to other funders, or face to face visits and accounts.

## £6m to £10m

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Though I understand the reasons behind it, I am dismayed by the number of smaller Foundations becoming so narrow in terms of their conditions, especially those that make small grants but insist that they won't fund a whole project. Some Trusts also have extremely broad criteria coupled with enormous list of exclusions – I have been a Trust fundraiser for 9 years and I feel that a growing number of Trusts are obviously just there for tax avoidance.

Charitable/voluntary grant funders are incredibly useful – in helping good causes to do innovative things, build them up, accept and learn from any failings, and sustain them with minimal bureaucracy – far, far more so than Government funding.

I have already mentioned that I wish more Trusts would fund revenue, particularly salaries. I also would like the systems to be easier, particularly knowing when the trustees are meeting and how far in advance they need information. Also if they have application forms, to ensure they can be completed electronically, (i.e. not pdf so that they cannot be typed on).

Opportunity and need for Foundations to strategically work together and co-fund in areas of mutual purpose. We ask the organisations we

fund to be effective at partnership working – we should lead the way on this and set a positive example.

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It would help if a funder was clear about what it knew about the work we were seeking funding for and the area we were seeking to work in. This would help us to make better decisions in terms of possible collaboration.

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It would help if a funder was clear about what it knew about the work we were seeking funding for and the area we were seeking to work in. This would help us to make better decisions in terms of possible collaboration.

## Over £10m

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The Foundation has been enormously helpful in providing contacts and ideas for taking our strategy forward. In addition they have allowed us to use their facilities for meetings with other partners on occasions for strategy development. The support has been invaluable.

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Sometimes getting large grants can be an easier process than small amounts. Some smaller funders want an extraordinary amount of detail. It would be great to have some kind of methodology where small amounts of money is a light touch application.

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I believe it would be greatly beneficial if more funders would share more about their criteria and outlook, and be more open to enquiries from fundraisers. This would enable both parties to make more efficient use of their time.

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In some instances there is an inconsistency between funders approach to support.



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Our situation is unusual - we are both a funder and working collaboratively with other funders to reach new places and do more with less.

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As someone relatively new to the charity sector (less than two years) it appears that securing grant funding is a competition based on the writing ability of the requester rather than the true needs of the beneficiaries. I think funding should be a partnership where both sides work together to benefit the vulnerable and disadvantaged. If a grant submission does not fully meet the funder's criteria then rather than giving an immediate 'no' they should have the opportunity to share their view of how, if at all, the project could meet the funder's objectives and then applicant should be given the chance to amend their project if they wish to do so and it still meets the needs of the beneficiaries. Relationships should be more than money.

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Would like it if more funders actually understood digital and funded digital projects. How are charities meant to ensure they are fit for purpose in 2016 if only a handful of funders actually get digital and have tech funding streams?

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A lack of engagement before grant application. A lack of feedback in order to learn.

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Foundations all have very different reporting methods and requirements. It places a stress on organisations with limited resources to try and comply with numerous conditions. The language is also inconsistent. E.g. I was recently asked how we measure social impact only to discover that all that was required was basic indicators i.e. numbers taking part. Not what I would define as social impact. Even now when trying to include the costs of project evaluation and delivery this has been questioned and in one prominent case removed from the grant offered - and yet the Foundation expects stringent reporting.

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Practice varies from donor to donor. The most recent donor used an example here is based outside the UK and therefore far less transparent than UK based Foundations. Even here, however, although annual reports and accounts will generally provide some information on the Trust/Foundation's funding priorities and giving history, this is very variable. Some funders provide far more detail than others and some are more easily available to talk to. Having said that, we also appreciate that many funders - even those giving large amounts of money each year - are often run by one or two people and may be dealing with around 1,000 applications each year. They will also say that many applications they receive are clearly unsuitable and have not referred to their guidelines or information that is available on the various funder databases.

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Relationships need to work both ways, and organisations need to feel like they can approach funders with problems and potential solutions without feeling like they will damage a good relationship beyond repair. As a fundraiser I don't trust many funders to take the view that sometimes a project can go wrong without it forever colouring the funder's view of the entire organisation.

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## Annex 2

# Survey questions

### Section 1

#### About funders in general

- What is your current role in the organisation?
- Do you think funders are accountable to the **people they seek to help**?
- Do you think funders are accountable to the **organisations they support**?
- Do you think funders are accountable to **the general public**?
- Who normally instigates communication between your organisation and its funders?
- Would it help your work if the funders that support you **collaborated** more closely together?

### Section 2

#### About your funder

- If your organisation has a problem with this funder's practice, how likely are you to tell them?
- How much does your funder **listen** to and **respond** appropriately to any questions and concerns?
- How far does your funder **trust** your organisation?
- How far does your funder **understand** you organisation?
- How well does your organisation **understand** what your funder wants?

- Did your funder communicate with your beneficiaries before they funded your organisation?
- Has your funder communicated with your beneficiaries since they made the grant?
- Please add any additional comments about the levels of **trust** and **understanding** between your organisation and its funder.
- What would you most like your funder to do in order to improve their relationship with you in the future?
- In general, does your funder's practice encourage your organisation to compete or collaborate with its peers and potential partners?
- Does your funder share anything with your organisation apart from money?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

### Section 3 About you

- How many trusts and foundations are currently funding your work?
- What percentage of staff time would you estimate it takes to resource all your funder relationships?
- What is the annual turnover of your organisation?
- Where is your organisation based?

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