



Greening Our Grant Holders Research Project Final Report

Researched & Prepared for the Big Lottery Fund

By

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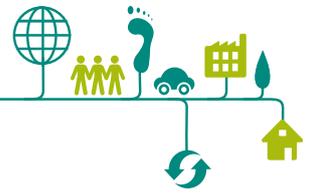
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1. Executive summary

The Big Lottery Fund (The Fund) commissioned this research report to help its deliberations on how to introduce and successfully embed environmental considerations into its grant-making processes in the most effective and resource efficient manner.

The research brief entailed a desk-based study to identify existing environmental considerations adopted by a range of grant-makers across all sizes and within the UK and a selection of developed world countries. A sub-set of the UK based grant-makers were interviewed to gather their views and opinions on existing practices and what likely future trends in this area might develop.

Internally, staff with roles spanning the range of grant-making functions were interviewed, and a series of reports and other documentation reviewed, to provide an understanding of what The Fund has historically trialed in this area.

The evaluation of existing practices has led to the development of a Spectrum of Interventions that span a range from a light touch intervention through to a bespoke, individualised approach that embeds itself within each funded project. The six approaches identified are:

1. Information provision

Considered the lightest touch intervention and consists of both hard copy and internet based resources available for the use of Applicants or Grant Holders, or takes the form of general advice that is available to all. This was the most popular form of existing intervention found in the research.

2. Application questions

The requirement for Applicants to supply a form of data and/or information at the application form stage. This intervention ranges from the simple, tick box, closed form question that asks the Applicant if they have considered their environmental impact, whether they have an environmental policy / action plan/ procedures / certifications / accreditations in place, through to an open question where they provide evidence that they are taking action to improve their environmental performance.

3. Grant decision criteria

This adds particular requirements to the grant offer. This approach can be closely linked to the Requirement for Action intervention, i.e. they need to take action during the project, or it can be linked to requirement(s) that the grant holder need to satisfy criteria before receiving funding.

4. Requirements for action

This approach requires the grant holder to take specific action through the lifetime of the project. For example, a requirement to report on particular resource usage, such as energy, water and waste, and/or the requirement to develop an environmental policy and action plan.

5. External evaluation

This approach uses external expert help to assist the grant-maker to assess the environmental performance of the grantee. This is only a viable approach in conjunction with a requirement for action or target setting through the lifetime of the project.

6. Expert help

This intervention is, by its nature, the most bespoke of the approaches. This type of approach uses (typically, but not exclusively) external experts to work with individual grant-holders to come up with personalised plans to help them reduce their environmental impacts.

The Figure below illustrates the Spectrum of Interventions, and demonstrates where the research discovered examples of existing practice across the grant-making landscape both in the UK and internationally.



The main recommendation from this research is for the Big Lottery Fund to examine options 1,4,5,6 in more detail. Approaches 2 and 3 were considered to be at odds with the general direction of travel of the new strategic framework within the Fund and not deemed appropriate for the desired outcomes, however there are notable exceptions here regarding capital based funding which are discussed.

In addition, while investigating these options for suitability of adoption through the Fund’s grant-making portfolio, the following general guidelines to aid successful implementation of the interventions were developed and are recommended:

Allocate Adequate Resources – A consideration that The Fund needs to recognise is this type of programme will take a number of years to develop, launch, embed and grow, and adequate resources (both human and financial) must be dedicated in order to allow it to embed and become accepted and normalised. It will take time and effort to set it up and further time and effort for it to gain traction, but once it does it could bring years of benefits to The Fund’s supported organisations.

Build Internal Support - This initiative will require support throughout the organisation. The Board needs to be fully behind it, the senior management team needs to support it, and the Green Champions team will have an important part to play to raise its profile throughout the organisation. Minimising the additional burden on programme managers and other affected colleagues will help gain buy-in internally.

Build External Support - The research highlighted there is a strong desire amongst other funding bodies to implement some form of environmental support within their operations and these other organisations may be willing to support this initiative financially, through pooled staffing, sharing know-how and expertise and/or some other in-kind support. At the very least it would be beneficial to build up a network of keen individuals to establish a Community of Interest within engaged funding bodies who may help with ideas and feedback.



Identify Barriers Early – Some potential barriers to implementing these ideas have been raised during this project, and it would be worthwhile to identify what additional barriers might surface as the programme develops. For example, it will be important to explore the potential challenges which devolution could pose.

Build Up a Picture of your Grant Holders - The diversity of The Fund's grant holders will make the development of an effective support programme challenging, so for each grant programme build up a picture of what the typical grant holders look like (e.g. size of organisation, types of activity, sources of environmental impact, sources of cost). Without a clear idea regarding the profile of organisations it will be difficult to tailor the approaches.

Talk to your Grant Holders – The scope of this research project did not extend to talking directly with grant holders but it would be a useful next step for The Fund to take in developing its thinking around the options it could adopt. Investigate what aspects of environmental sustainability your grant holders are struggling with most, or indeed, if they have even considered environmental issues to be of any relevance to them at all. Talk to them about potential barriers and challenges they may face through the introduction of these measures.

The research revealed that, although environmental considerations in grant making had been discussed frequently over the past decade, and at the highest levels within grant-makers, most initiatives to address this did not get past the discussion stage – with a few notable exceptions. However, all of the grant makers interviewed expressed interest and enthusiasm for some form of environmental intervention – qualified by the fact it should not be too much of an imposition on the grant-holder however.

The time now seems right for the Big Lottery Fund to take the lead on this issue in the general funding landscape, in a potentially similar way to how the Arts Council England has taken the lead for the creative sector. The Arts Council England has, over the last three years, successfully embedded environmental sustainability in its revenue funded portfolio of over 700 organisations. The intervention consisted of the requirement for all funded organisations to report on their energy and water usage annually, and also to produce both an environmental policy and an annual action plan. The results to date are impressive, in the second year of the programme, organisations collectively reported savings of £1.25 million in their utility bills, 98% of organisations self-reported themselves to be engaged with the programme, over half (56%) reported financial benefits, 52% reported reputational benefits and 73% reported staff morale benefits as a result in participating in the programme. The Arts Council is now embarking in the second phase of the programme, with an enhanced ambition to reward and support the 'leaders' in their sector that have emerged from the first phase of the programme.

There is a further piece of work to be done to identify exactly how and what a suitable set of interventions for The Fund's diverse funded portfolio will look like. However, from the evidence assembled within this report, the proposition to embed environmental sustainability into general grant-making within The Fund's range of funded programmes, appears a sound and realistic endeavor and the timing right to begin to put in place a strategy to enable this to be rolled out in the new phase of the general strategic framework over the next five years.



2. Introduction & Context

The Big Lottery Fund (The Fund) provides publicly generated lottery money, in the form of grant-funding, to a wide range of projects across the UK. It funds projects of every size, and it is considered that many of its funded projects could benefit from some type of environmental awareness raising and action, from the inclusive 'Awards for All' programme which gives out smaller, one-off grants to community led projects, all the way up to multi-million pound grants, given out over a number of years, that can include capital spend and where environmental considerations – if built in at the start - could make a considerable impact on the project's sustainability.

Funding for all types of voluntary and community-led projects is very competitive and the publicly funded landscape always under scrutiny, with a continual tightening of budgets being the new reality. There is an understanding that by assisting funded projects to consider their environmental impacts and being mindful of resource use, this could result in reduced overall project running costs, minimised overheads from reductions in utility and other resource consumption related bills, and general positive PR and messaging about the issues. These could be very positive additional benefits for the projects themselves (even for those that do not have an obvious environmental dimension) and help to ensure longer term sustainability of these projects beyond the funding period through minimising ongoing overheads and building in resilience.

The Big Lottery Fund is very conscious of, and well-versed, in the importance, promotion and evaluation of the social sustainability of its funded projects, and is sophisticated in its evaluation of this aspect of sustainability. However, it has reached the realisation that it has not, to date, comprehensively addressed the environmental sustainability of the operations of the projects it funds. There have been intensive pilot projects undertaken in the past that have addressed this issue but, to date, there has been no quantitative evaluation of the positive impacts of these pilots and they have tended to be short-lived and limited in the number of projects helped.

From 2012, The Fund has been working consistently to understand, quantify and reduce its environmental impact across all of its offices and functions, and it has created a strategy, work plan and a set of realistic targets to help it reach the binding carbon reduction targets set government through its Greening Government initiative. The Big Lottery Fund also set up their *Green Champions* team at this time to play a key role in meeting these targets. Over the past three years The Fund has reduced its carbon footprint overall by an impressive 15% and has made good progress on all fronts with reductions in resource use across its functions, including waste reduction and recycling, energy use, water consumption and transport.

Consequently, The Fund now feels it is in a strong position to look outwardly at its funded portfolio and investigate the variety of means by which it could potentially assist funded projects to become more environmentally conscious and active in the running of their operations. This coincides with a new strategic framework that The Fund has developed that has at its heart: *'People In The Lead'*. In order to not re-invent the wheel in terms of developing environmental interventions for the grant funded sector, The Fund commissioned Paula Owen Consulting to undertake this research piece to examine any existing practices within the grant-making community, both in the UK and abroad, to help it develop its thinking in this area.

Through this research project The Fund is looking to gain insight from the external grant funding landscape in terms of what *prior art* exists for introducing and embedding considerations of environmental sustainability into funded projects and programmes. The brief required a deeper understanding of the pros and cons of the existing interventions, and, ideally, a range of provisionally priced options of what it may cost to implement such schemes. The Fund also required a series of recommendations of the options available, presented as a spectrum of levels of



interventions, and the accompanying support mechanisms each intervention would require from the funding body.

This report summarises the findings of the research and lays out a series of options, from a 'light touch' approach through to bespoke, one-on-one support packages. Finally it discusses the opportunities and challenges of each option, with an indication of the costs, on a per project assisted basis, where it has been possible to estimate likely expenditure levels.



3. Methodology

The methodology to undertake a comprehensive review into the options open to The Fund in terms of successfully introducing environmental considerations into its grant making was divided into the following six main tasks.

1. Internal review of Big Lottery Fund documentation

A review of 36 internal reports and research documents ranging from 2006 to 2014, to assess the discussions, considerations and approaches The Fund has already undertaken to assist grant holders in considering their environmental impact and longer term sustainability. A summary of all pertinent documentation features in Section 4.

2. External review of activities within other funders

A review of a wide selection of funding bodies in the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. In the UK cases, a deliberately broad range of grant giving bodies was chosen in terms of size and funding focus. Organisations not directly involved in funding themselves, but instead part of the process, were also reviewed, e.g. grant administrators and regulators, as their views and current practice on the subject were thought to be pertinent to the research. A summary of findings can be found in Section 5.1.

3. Internal Big Lottery Fund Interviews

Interviews took place with ten staff members. These ranged from personnel involved at the strategic level, looking at future policy and programme development, capital project funding, all the way through to the funding officers who work on the ground, and closely with the funded projects. This gave a well-rounded and broad overview of the experience, opinions, ideas, opportunities and challenges that The Fund might face when implementing future environmental considerations. Summaries and key findings from the interviews can be found in Section 4.2.

4. External Interviews

Simultaneously, thirteen external UK-based organisations were interviewed, covering the spectrum of grant-making functions, from the front-line grant-makers, both public and privately funded, through to grant administrators and regulators. The range covered grant-makers as diverse as individual philanthropic givers, both small and large private Foundations and Trusts, and large public funders. The funding areas covered ranged from environmental, social, heritage and land reclamation. Included in this range was a large regulator, who was asked what powers, if any, they had to demand environmental action and also a grant administrator who administrates a number of grant funds on behalf of, typically, smaller schemes. The main themes and lessons taken from these interviews can be found in Section 5.2

5. Evaluation of Intervention Methods

Having gathered the available evidence in Tasks 1-4, the findings were used to undertake an evaluation of the various approaches that integrated, in some way, environmental considerations into grant giving. This evaluation assessed their strengths and weaknesses, giving a qualitative indication of relative costs (where possible) of different approaches and, where evidence was apparent, gave an indication of their success/impact to date. In order to complete the evaluation, we developed metrics that gave an indication of impact based on qualitative/quantitative criteria.



6. Development of Options

Our research showed that there are many options and levels of integration for introducing environmental sustainability into a grant making processes, from the pre-application stage all the way through the application and grant awarding stages, through to the evaluation at the completion of the project. We have used the findings to develop a framework of six main types of intervention that span a spectrum of 'light touch' approaches through to a deep integration into the projects themselves. This framework of interventions is discussed in Section 6.



4. Internal Findings

This section describes the internal research undertaken for this project. This covered the Big Lottery Fund pilot projects previously commissioned that focused on introducing environmental considerations into a small number of funded projects and also the resources available for applicants and grant recipients to help them consider environmental issues. Also summarised in this section are the findings from the interviews with Big Lottery Fund staff and details of the workshop held as part of the process.

4.1 Review of Big Lottery Fund documentation

The Big Lottery Fund, as part of the background research for this project, supplied a selection of reports (both internally and externally authored), board papers and research findings on the broad topic of environmental issues across the grant making process. A total of 36 documents were reviewed and summarised.

The documentation grouped into four main areas of interest:

1. The approaches The Fund has piloted previously that address embedding environmental sustainability into grant making, between 2007-2014
2. Existing Big Lottery Fund resources that require/help applicants and grantees to consider their environmental impact
3. Analysis of Big Lottery Fund projects that have environmental sustainability as their focus, in contrast to looking at how projects can run their operations more sustainably
4. The Fund's internally-led discussions on incorporating environmental sustainability into grant-making

This section present summaries of the documentation provided under areas 1 and 2, as these two themes are most relevant.

In addition, one externally authored document, the IFF¹'s *'Funding for the Future'* report² is regarded as a key resource that touches upon all aspects of this project, a summary of its main points are found in Case Study 1.

4.2 Measures piloted by The Fund to improve the Environmental Sustainability of grant-making 2007-2014

This section describes previous projects The Fund has commissioned to trial the introduction of environmental sustainability into its grant making. The headings used are the titles of the reports, for easy of reference.

2007-8 Sustainable Development Phase 1& 2 pilots 2007

In 2007, Groundwork completed a pilot programme; funded by The Fund, working with 10 'Reaching Communities' grant recipients in England to help them improve their environmental performance while carrying out their projects. The purpose of the pilot was to help The Fund ascertain how best to utilise its financial influence to ensure that its funded activity was delivered in an as environmentally sustainable way as possible while accepting that each project is different in scope and focus.

¹ The Intelligent Funders Forum (IFF)

² The IFF report can be downloaded from here: <http://www.acf.org.uk/iff/aboutus/index.aspx?id=3992>



Groundwork helped the organisations review their current practices and understand their environmental impacts, they ran appropriate training activity with each project and then worked with them to draft a 'Sustainable Development Action Plan' that mapped out the practical steps that could be taken to move forward. However, no quantitative analysis of the outcomes of this pilot was undertaken. Following the completion of Phase 1, The Fund appointed Groundwork to carry out a further pilot, Phase 2.

The Sustainable Development Phase 2 Pilot Programme was made up of a number of key activities:

- Provide one-to-one support to 30 chosen grant recipients to help them produce a Sustainable Development Action Plan and help them to adopt more environmentally sustainable practices
- To engage with the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), to establish the views and practices of their members around environmental issues, and questioning them around reasonable minimum requirements for sustainable development performance.
- To undertake an external evaluation of the Phase 1 participants to ascertain their progressions since being involved with the programme and an external evaluation of the 30 Phase 2 projects to determine client satisfaction.
- To review existing tools for environmental performance measurement.

A further 32 grant recipients of Reaching Communities funding, across England were identified to participate in this pilot. The 32 organisations spanned a range of organisational size, focus of activity, and ownership of resources.

The Fund enabled Groundwork to allocate 57 days to support the 32 organisations (although 6 dropped out, so they delivered to 26 organisations in total). Following further conversations with Groundwork's advisors, it was decided that some development work was required for each organisation, to establish their current practices and attitudes towards sustainable development, and to make a decision as to how many days support might be appropriate. Typically each project received 2 days of support, some projects only received one, but others had three days.

Opportunities for environmental improvement were identified through the process, through a mix of walk-by audits and interviews with key staff in each participating organisation.

Unfortunately, there seems not to be a quantified evaluation of the outcomes of this project, which makes evaluating its success, or otherwise, difficult. An external evaluation of both pilots 1 & 2 was undertaken but this is more a qualitative survey of attitudes and impressions of the support given rather than a quantified assessment of results and outcomes.

2012-13 Environmental placement pilot project report 2013

Investing in Communities is the main large grant giving portfolio for The Fund in Scotland. When developing the criteria for this portfolio of funding activity The Fund wanted to mainstream environmental considerations alongside both 'equalities' and 'empowerment'.

This requirement led to the development of the Environmental Placement pilot programme, the aim of which was to help a number of grant holders improve their environmental awareness, change behaviours and ultimately improve their environmental performance. The project ended with an event to share learning. The funded projects chosen were from a diverse set of communities, covering a wide range of issues, none of them were primarily environmentally focused projects.

The project concentrated on placing a number of students, some studying environmentally related topics but some not, into the projects for an intensive period of time. They would work with the projects closely, identifying the areas of environmental impact and addressing aspects of potential environmental improvement that were practical and possible for the projects to undertake. The



students were mentored by a professional environmental consultancy who provided them with two days of training.

From an environmental aspect, the pilot project aimed to achieve the following outcomes:

- Have a positive impact on the project's environmental performance
- Increase the awareness of a project's environmental impact
- Provide good practice examples for The Fund to use to share with other projects

Nine projects were chosen to have a student placement work with them for 8 weeks/40 days. The students, mostly environmental students on MSc courses, were interviewed and then placed with the project full or part time for the duration of the project. Students worked within the projects/organisations on a variety of environmentally focused initiatives, the most common threads of activities were:

- Audits of the organisations for environmental impact
- Working on environmental improvement recommendations to put to the board
- Looking at Environmental Management Systems (EMS) such as ISO14001, 20121, EMAS and others that the organisation could potentially work towards
- Engagement activities with staff
- Helping to develop and implement sustainable travel plans

From the evaluation report, it is clear that around half of the projects, four in total, had some successful outcomes at the time of writing³. There appeared to be no quantitative evaluation of the success of the individual placements however, which is a weakness in the project design. Although a small sample set, the approach in practice appeared to work well in a number of instances. This approach to imbedding environmental sustainability into Big Lottery Fund projects is very intensive and one-on-one based. The length of the placement 8 weeks/40 days, seem excessive for the outcomes required, but may be a result of the fact that students were used, presumably with no 'real life' experience of auditing and consultancy work within organisations, and hence more time was needed for them to bed-in and fully understand what they were required to do.

A second document reports that no reductions in carbon footprints were recorded from the project – which is surprising given the focus of the project, as this should have been straightforward to record and calculate from bills. From this report is the following comment:

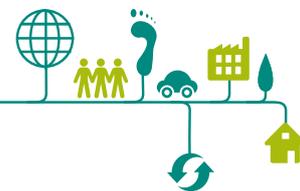
“On discussion with grants staff there was also a missed opportunity to assist communities' best use of their physical assets in a way that minimised their environmental impact.”

This approach to improving the environmental sustainability of projects is one of the most intensive interventions discovered through the course of this research, as it is placing a full time external resource within the funded project for a period of up to 2 months. However, the fact that they are students, with no prior experience of this type of work, has to be borne in mind. An upscaling and roll out of this approach may encounter quality control issues if students continue to be the main delivery mechanism.

Subsequently, the project has been re-commissioned in Scotland, and now will comprise another 10 projects a year for a 3 year period, a total of 30 projects. Learning from the pilot project to be used to improve the continuing 'Support Contract' are stated as follows:

- improve induction for both the grant holder and student
- provide assistance with setting a baseline to measure impact

³ For the remaining projects they were not complete, or not showing tangible results at the time of writing



- provide additional specific support and guidance to students regarding behaviour change and employee engagement
- take a more flexible approach to placement term and duration
- run regular networking events throughout the contract
- require a clearer plan for taking forward the work once the student leaves the placement
- seek additional consultant support available at the end of the student placement to assist in taking specific elements forward.

2014 Renew Wales Interim Report 2014

This two year pilot project was delivered by Renew Wales (funded through Sustainable Steps which, in turn, is funded through Big Lottery Fund dormant funds) - a network of 'Coordinators' and 'Mentors'. The individual Coordinator's role was to identify and engage with community groups in their local area and encourage them to develop an environmental project. The group could be already established, or be established to carry out the project. The Coordinator's role was not to deliver the project themselves, but instead to provide help, advice and assistance to the community group delivering the project. The Mentors role was different in that they were brought on-board the individual projects by the Coordinator to deliver particular skills and advice to the group, as and when needed. Examples of this include undertaking energy audits of buildings, providing marketing and PR advice, providing expertise around community energy schemes and developing legal frameworks.

The structure of the scheme was simple: a central project director, a set number of Coordinators all with targets of reaching and converting⁴ a certain number of community groups, and a wider bank of Mentors who can be called upon when needed. All Coordinators and Mentors are paid the same daily rate.

Their conversion rate for successfully engaging with groups and converting into environmental projects was around 60% at the time of the Interim Report, their official target was 75%. However, the report pointed out that momentum was now growing and they were confident of getting close to that target conversion rate by the project close. Groups had to produce an Action Plan as an example of a measured outcome.

The focus of this project is different to the typical environmental help given to projects to help them improve the environmental sustainability of the project they are running, in that the Coordinators / Mentors are helping the community groups deliver an environmental projects – not to help them deliver an existing project in a more environmentally friendly way. However, there is value in looking at the model generally as a way of supporting Big Lottery Fund-supported projects (not necessarily environmentally focused) to consider any environmental aspects they could bring into the project and then help and support them to deliver these aspects.

There was no budgetary data in the report, hence we do not have an indication of the cost of such a support mechanism. This would be useful to establish if available.

4.3 Big Lottery Fund resources that help applicants or grant-holders to consider their environmental impact

Big Lottery Fund Sustainable Development web resource - Guide for working towards a Sustainable Community (2015)

Guidance to help grantees think about the general sustainability of their project. They are presented with a series of questions and asked to provide information in the following areas:

⁴ The group ends up running an environmentally focused project of some description

- Environment
- Economic
- Social, and
- Community involvement and raising awareness.

Big Lottery Fund Sustainable Development checklist 2011

A document that is a more comprehensive version of the 'Guide for working towards a Sustainable Community' (described above). A 13 page document that gives readers background, overview, and consideration of the issues, and also a checklist.

Big Lottery Fund Sustainable Communities factsheet

A 2-pager highlighting examples of good practice in Sustainable Development, including specifically what environmental sustainability can do to help projects deliver more impact.

Community Asset Transfer application form (CAT2) Documents:

Application form R3 (2010 wales):

Section 4.3 mentions environmental sustainability – but in general terms, no specific requirements

CAT2 Capital project delivery plan – detailed stage final:

Section 6.4 Sustainability looks at:

- energy efficiency of the building
- adaptation to the effects of future climate change

It also contains a 'Checklist of Sustainability' items that must be ticked off to confirm that information has been provided as part of the form, including BREEAM (where new build or extension is part of the project) Low/Zero Carbon (LZC) technologies, Green travel, Climate Change adaptation, waste management, etc.

This is a very comprehensive list of environmental aspects and appears the whole checklist must be considered and completed as part of the application form process.

Case Study 1: Funding for the future – How grant-makers can help to create a greener world (2012)

The Intelligent Funding Forum (IFF) report, *Funding for the Future*, part funded by the Fund, has been written as a guide for funders to help them consider the inclusion of environmental sustainability considerations in their grant-making activities, regardless of the focus for their funding priorities. It suggests a number of ways in which grant makers can achieve this without losing focus of their primary concerns. The driver for the report was the realisation that grant makers can have a powerful influence on their grantees' behaviour. Funders already have a track record of encouraging organisations of all sizes and types to embed new practices and change behaviours through a mix of recommendations and requirements. However, it was acknowledged a balance must be struck between creating more bureaucratic hoops for grantees to jump through and the potential impact achievable through implementing environmental requirements.

The report focuses on the following areas:

- giving a rationale for action from funders on this issue
- an overview of the principles of effective intervention
- looking at practical action already taken
- evaluating success
- sources of further advice and information/ expertise.

The report emphasises the idea that everyone can do something, and even small changes can have immediate positive effects for the organisation involved – lower running costs, more accessible services, enhanced reputation and increased resilience to the inevitable impacts of climate change. Action is needed at the micro as well as macro scale, and the 3rd sector has an important role to play – they are more trusted, seen to be working for a common good and not governed by profit-making concerns overriding other issues. They recommend that the funders think about the funded project's core purposes first, then consider how environmental concerns impact upon them, this helps grant-givers to develop an appropriate and logical intervention that makes sense to everyone involved – and enables them to embed an environmental awareness into everything they do. The report emphasizes the importance of ensuring the funding body considers its own operations as well and tries to reduce as much as possible its own environmental impacts, but highlights it doesn't have to get everything perfect itself, before it start to help its grantees to improve. However, a good sense of what it involves, garnered from doing it yourselves, is invaluable to help others.

The main insights and recommendations, from funders already trying to do things in this area, are:

Decide and be clear on your focus, do you want to achieve:

- More of a focus on the challenge of climate change and bringing the issue to the heart of non-environmental organisations' practices.
- Make a more holistic approach to environmental sustainability generally and focusing on what the grantee can contribute to general sustainable practices

Decide how you want to engage:

- Supporting non-environmental orgs to make the connection between CC and their own activities and how it impacts
- Increasing awareness and/or developing and improving infrastructure to assist orgs
- What individuals and orgs can do on a practical day to day approach

Be clear about methods and expectations

- Funders do not want to burden grantees with more obstacles to jump through, but they're clear that change is unlikely to happen without some pressure from funders
- Clear steer to avoid a 'tick box' approach wherever possible
- Try to embed environmental decisions in the mission and priorities of each org
- Funders also need to be prepared to fund options that are environmentally the right thing to do, but will cost the grantee more to implement
- Provide incentives and practical help to those who are keen to go further

Reflect and share learnings

- You learn more from your failures than your successes - be prepared to share them
- Evaluate everything carefully and share the results
- Go beyond general calls for action and on to more precise recommendations and guidance on tools and methods

4.4 Internal Interviews

Ten members of Big Lottery Fund staff interviewed were chosen to give a broad picture of the grant making process, covering the process from initial policy and strategy work which leads to the creation of new programmes, to the programme’s development, the vetting and processing of applicants, the delivery of funding and final reporting. The staff involved were:

- John Rose – Director for Wales
- Richard Townend - Head of Funding Development
- Cath Logan - Policy & Learning Advisor, Scotland
- Tessa Wiley - Head of Policy and Learning, England
- Laura Behan - Funding Officer, grant management team
- Helen Kelly - Funding Officer, Reaching Communities
- Mark Baine - Funding Officer, Northern Ireland
- Richard Labran - Funding Officer, Awards For All
- Baldev Gill – Capital Advisor
- James Stratton – Capital Manager

The interviews conducted with the staff focused on the more practical side of implementing environmental sustainability support within the organisation’s grant programmes. The interviews elicited a number of very interesting insights which have been divided into three categories:

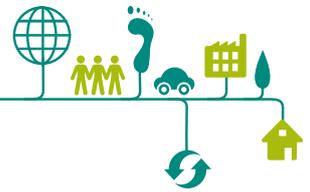
The need for support

“Many grant holders would value advice and support in environmental sustainability”
“Help grant holders become financially sustainable”
“1,000s of smaller organisations need support, larger ones are already doing sustainability”
“Grant funding falls short, focusing on short term gains in social capital, not long term goals”
“Being publicly funded, Big Lottery Fund should act as a beacon”

There was agreement from all of the members of staff who we interviewed that there is a need for environmental sustainability support for grant holders and that many (but by no means all) of the funded organisations would value assistance in this area. The most frequently cited justification for this support was connected to helping projects improving their financial sustainability through reduced energy and resource costs and it was considered likely that this monetary benefit of adopting pro-environmental behaviours would be one of the stronger hooks for projects which are more socially, rather than environmentally, focused. The greatest need was thought to come from the thousands of smaller organisations which The Fund supports. One interviewee thought that larger funded organisations would already be engaged in sustainability as they would have the infrastructure and personnel needed to tackle the issues, but the smaller organisations in general do not have the capacity, but could benefit substantially.

How to implement support

“Are we interested in projects or organisations?”
“It needs to be fresh and engaging or the grant holders won’t be interested”
“Going beyond the usual advice will be key to getting buy-in”
“Approach should be intelligent i.e. appropriate for size of grant”
“Can environmental sustainability benefits go beyond funded org to beneficiaries?”
“Support should be worked into the project in a consistent way”
“Grant holders need to understand the benefits”
“It’s not appropriate to impose requirements on grant holders <£100k”
“Keep requirements to a minimum if possible”



A number of suggestions were made regarding what the approach to support should look like. It was thought that making the support engaging, creative and fresh by looking beyond the usual approaches (such as encouragements to switch off lights or insulate) and really communicating the benefits of adopting pro-environmental behaviour would generate better buy-in from grant holders. When it came to implementing a system of support for grant holders, a strong theme emerging from the interviews was that the approach adopted should be proportionate to the scale of the grant and should minimise the burden on grant holders. In some cases grant applicants already have to complete long application forms which requires a substantial amount of administrative effort. For smaller grants the administrative burden is greatly reduced but it was thought that imposing requirements on grant holders was not the way forward and that a more support-oriented approach would be more successful. When it came to capital project funding, it was made clear that any requirements for action were stated at the start of the project and built into the terms and conditions. It was stressed it was much more difficult to implement ideas after the projects had commenced.

The Challenges ahead

“Socially focused projects don’t raise sustainability as an issue when applying for grant funding”

“Small and medium sized grant holders are very diverse”

“How can we steer grant holders towards sustainability without becoming the ‘Green Police’”

“Differences between devolved nations could pose a challenge”

“If criteria are to be included then a pre-application support programme might be necessary”

“Application forms have grown in size and are now being cut back”

“A lot of change is underway at The Fund at the moment which could make implementation challenging”

“It is a bit of an eye opener that there isn’t any active monitoring of environmental outcomes”

A number of challenges were identified by the interviewees. One of the most significant of these is the fact that there is a move underway within Big Lottery Fund to trim back grant application forms so that there is less burden on the grant applicants. Within this context it was perceived that it would be difficult to add new questions pertaining to environmental sustainability. The influence and different priorities of the devolved nations could also present challenges to implementing a universal approach across grant programmes and this issue should be considered from the outset when developing the support approach. A final challenge identified by one interviewee was that there is not a culture of monitoring environmental outcomes of programmes and field trials and this will have to change if effective programmes encouraging environmental sustainability are to be implemented.

4.5 Internal Workshop

Two thirds through the project, an internal workshop was held with a select group of Big Lottery Fund staff, from across the organisation, to discuss the findings to date and debate the possible ways forward. An external speaker, Ian Rimington from the Arts Council England, was invited along to present on the findings of their environmental reporting programme. Attendees included:

Sarah Cheshire	Knowledge Manager
John Rose	Director for Wales
Mark Baine (VC)	Funding Officer (NI)
Rob Roffe	Senior Policy & Learning Manager (Wales)
Renu London	Learning and Programme Manager
Sinead Fortune (VC)	Funding Officer (Scotland)
Fazila Dawson (VC)	Funding Officer (Scotland)
Jenny Fish (VC)	Funding Officer (England)

The discussions emanating from the workshop, and the points made by the participants have been taken into account and are expressed in the Recommendations section of the report.



5. The External Grant-Making Landscape response to Environmental Sustainability Considerations

5.1 Reviews of Funding Bodies' Websites

A series of 'deep dive', desk-based external reviews were conducted of the publically available information on grant making bodies both in the UK and overseas. Apart from the UK, four countries: USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, were examined. Here we describe a summary of those findings.

Arts Council England (UK) – Require all their National portfolio organisations (Npo), Major partner museums (Mpm) and Bridge organisations to report on their environmental footprint (energy and water) once a year, and they must also produce an environmental policy and action plan. Their contractor has to report on the progress of over 700 organisations each year, tracking how many organisations are submitting their footprint data and have an environmental policy and action plan. Arts Council England's contractor provides help and support, through workshops and webinars to help organisations fulfil their requirements under the funding agreement. This programme is described in Case Study 2.

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/our-priorities-2011-15/environmental-sustainability>

http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/Sustaining_Great_Art_Environmental_Report_MidTerm_results.pdf

Ashden (UK) – Ashden helps to share the know-how of the winners (of the Ashden awards – not strictly a grant scheme, more a competition with a set of winners in a number of categories around sustainable energy); helps winners of the awards to expand their work. Has resources on the website for schools to lower their carbon footprint and provides peer-to-peer (teacher-led) workshops and knowledge sharing within their 'Lower CO₂' schools programme (however this is not a grant scheme).

<http://www.ashden.org/resources>

Australia Council for the Arts (Australia) - The City of Melbourne has partnered with Australia Council for the Arts to create a new initiative, called the 'Greenie-in-Residence Project'. The programme is open to Melbourne-based theatre artists and arts organisations and gives them the opportunity to build on their environmental performance and practical sustainability knowledge. This is achieved by providing successful applicants with access to a sustainability expert and a series of workshops over the course of a year, helping them to incorporate environmental sustainability into the production and distribution of their work.

<http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/artforms/theatre/greenie-in-residence>

Barrow Cadbury (UK) – Barrow Cadbury asks grantees about the changes they have made to reduce their carbon footprint. This information is gathered through an open, voluntary question at the end-of-project reporting stage. They provide a checklist of no/low cost measures and links to sources of help.

<http://www.barrowcadbury.org.uk/environmental-sustainability>

Ben & Jerry's Foundation (USA) – Applicants' goals should resonate with the foundation's mission to further social justice, protect the environment or support family farms and local food systems.

<http://benandjerrysfoundation.org/the-grassroots-organizing-for-social-change-program>

Calouste Gulbenkian (UK) – The Calouste Gulbenkian 'Open Fund'⁵ application form asks applicants to comment about how they approach environmental sustainability. It's an open question

⁵ The open fund is currently not available, but may be recommissioned in the future



and does not count towards their application. There is no official evaluation/value associated with this question.

Captain Planet Foundation (USA) – Has simple educator resources on their website including a Project Learning Garden Sustainability Toolkit, a Classroom Sustainability Plan and a Best Practice Guide for schools.

<http://captainplanetfoundation.org/leadership-center>

<http://www.captainplanetfoundation.org/sustainability-toolkit>

<http://captainplanetfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Classroom-Sustainability-Plan.pdf>

<http://captainplanetfoundation.org/best-practices/>

Church Commissioners of England (UK) – Church Commissioners of England had a campaign which provided an energy audit tool to help churches identify savings; a step by step guide to increasing energy efficiency; advice on new technology, recycling, transport etc; news, case studies and best practice.

<http://www.shrinkingthefootprint.org> (no longer active)

<http://www.churchcare.co.uk/shrinking-the-footprint>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1258771/qs1558.pdf>

City Bridge Trust (UK) – City Bridge Trust asks applicants how they are taking steps to reduce their carbon footprint and offers free eco audits to all grant holders. This comes from external expert organisations and is financed by City Bridge Trust. The eco audits are not a requirement of grantees, but are highly recommended. The eco audits are also available to most third sector organisations who aren't necessarily grant recipients. One year after the eco audit the organisation is revisited to establish what progress has been made.

<http://www.citybridgetrust.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/4E28C280-146D-4B9A-9C8A-4EF3FEEB82CD/0/InvestinginLondonersapplicationguidance.pdf>

<http://www.citybridgetrust.org.uk/CBT/Grants/index/10EcoAudits.htm>

Cory Environmental (UK) – Cory Environmental asks applicants if they have considered energy efficiency measures as part of their project and to explain the environmental benefits which the project will bring (projects usually relate to the opening up of land which was previously inaccessible to the public or polluted).

<http://www.coryenvironmental.co.uk/userfiles/files/CETBappform.doc>

Environment Wales (UK) - Environment Wales supports voluntary projects and community groups through a long-term contact with a dedicated Development Officer. Development Officers offer advice and support throughout the lifecycle of a project with start-up support, guidance through the Environment Wales registration process, which allows them to apply for Environment Wales grants through to project delivery.

<http://www.environment-wales.org/support/129>

Landfill Communities Fund (UK) – Grants under the LCF are applied for through Community First who offer information and support to managers of community buildings and village halls to improve their energy efficiency. They provide a free downloadable toolkit and offer energy audits as a chargeable service. LCF expects applicants to have considered their environmental impact before applying and there is an opportunity on the application form to describe this information.

<http://www.communityfirst.org.uk/community-first-services/grants-and-funding>

<http://www.communityfirst.org.uk/community-first-services/community-development/village-halls/energy-efficiency>



NCVO (UK) – NCVO encourages voluntary and community organisations to prepare for changing weather patterns, protect or support their beneficiaries to cope with these changes, reduce organisational carbon footprint and campaign for a more sustainable future.

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/practical-support/impact/climate-change>

SITA Trust (UK) – SITA Trust used to provide a document called the ‘Green Guide’ which helped applicants to achieve environmental sustainability improvements however the organisation found that the document became out of date quite quickly (for example website addresses would change and advice would evolve) so the document is no longer available to grant holders. SITA Trust asks applicants on their online form what environmental sustainability considerations have been incorporated into the project (e.g. efficient appliances, use of recycled building materials, water saving toilets, tree planting etc). SITA Trust says that “It is the applying organisation's responsibility to undertake the relevant research and apply a common sense approach to the potential environmental impact of the proposed improvements.”

<http://www.sitatrust-applications.org.uk/Form8/ola1allq.pl>

Tudor Trust (UK) – The Tudor Trust supports “organisations which are thoughtful in their use of resources and which foster community resilience in the face of environmental, economic or social change”.

<http://tudortrust.org.uk/what-we-do/what-we-fund>

Welsh European Funding Office (UK) – WEFO is a group within the Welsh government that has the remit to ensure that sustainable development is embedded within European funded project. WEFO publishes guidance on environmental sustainability covering energy, environmental risk management, sustainable transport, materials efficiency and aspects of social sustainability.

<http://wefo.wales.gov.uk/publications/guidanceandpublications14-20/crosscutting1/?lang=en>

Waste Recycling Network (UK) – Applicants should have considered how the environmental impact of the project is minimised and this should be demonstrated in the application. For projects applying for energy efficiency measures then WREN insists on the project including an energy audit with the application.

<http://www.wren.org.uk/downloads/community-fund-application-form>

5.2 External interviews

In addition to the wide sweep of desk research conducted on the aforementioned organisations, to investigate more deeply any current practices, a series of telephone/face to face interviews were undertaken with thirteen UK-based organisations that have, in some capacity, involvement with the grant-making process. Organisations were chosen with responsibilities throughout the chain of functions, from regulatory bodies, to independent grant administrators, through to direct grant-makers, both large and small⁶, private and public funded, to get a sense of the current practices with

⁶ In terms of total assets available to distribute

regard to environmental considerations in the grant making area. Figure 1 depicts a graphic illustration of the organisations interviewed:



Figure 1: External organisations interviewed

We continue this section with a summary of the general themes that were emergent through the interviews, and provide summaries of the historical and/or current activities in this area for a number of the organisations interviewed. For Arts Council England we include an in-depth case study of their environmental reporting programme over the past three years, as it was the most comprehensive scheme identified in this research.

An overview of general emergent themes:

- Many grant-makers, both privately and publicly funded, have considered introducing environmental consideration in the past but few have instigated any form of programme in the last five years
- Generally the discussions have been at board level, but have not got past discussion stage – other priorities, such as social concerns, have typically taken precedence
- There was a general concern that adding environmental considerations to the grant-making process would add an increasing burden on the applicants and/or grant holder
- If a scheme has been introduced, then typically no systematic evaluation of impact was undertaken
- There was a general sense that something should be done to increase awareness and/or action of environmental considerations within grant making generally
- A majority of all interviewees think the issue of environmental sustainability will become more important in the future, the reasons cited ranged from the political to the physical, e.g. the changing environment due to climate change
- If the environment was considered in current grant-making, then themes around food, flooding, climate change, adaptation and divestment were mentioned



Esmee Fairbairn - Esmee Fairbairn does not currently consider environmental sustainability considerations in their grant making processes. They have discussed the issue in the past, but it has not translated into an intervention. They do however refer applicants/grant holders to external resources that give help and advice. A current theme pertinent to them is food, and hence they refer their grant holders to an external fact sheet, created by Sustain – the sustainable food & farming charity, that helps organisations think about the food they purchase – local, seasonal, sustainable etc., and what to look for when catering events.

Comic Relief - Comic Relief are also not currently including environmental sustainability in their grant making. However they are very strong internally on environmental sustainability. They have discussed the issue a number of times over the last decade, but nothing concrete has emerged. If they were to put an intervention in place in the future it would probably be concerning the threats of flooding and climate change, as these are the issues that represent a clear risk to vulnerable communities that are often the beneficiaries of their funding programmes. They consider themselves 'holistic' in their approach to grant making, hence are open to including environmental sustainability interventions if the topics continue to rise up the agenda in the future.

Grantscape - Grantscape is not a direct grant-maker, instead it administers small grants for, typically, landfill tax and smaller scale renewable schemes. Currently there are no existing criteria or requirements for any of their grantees. Grantscape themselves would be open to including environmental criteria/considerations, but this decision would have to be made by their clients – the funders, as the cost of implementing extra administrative functions would ultimately fall to them. As some of these grant schemes are particularly smaller in scale, this could represent a disproportionate increase in the administrative costs for the projects. Grantscape would support any measures to introduce these considerations however.

Entrust - Entrust is the regulator of landfill tax money, has no current remit to look into the general environmental sustainability of the grant giving in their area. They have the remit to ensure that the grants are given out in accordance to their 'Objects'.

City Bridge Trust – While the City Bridge Trust does not require their grantees to demonstrate environmental sustainability, they offer an eco audit to grant-holders that is undertaken by an external expert organisation who is allocated and paid for by the Trust. The eco audit looks at the operations of the grant holder, in terms of its buildings, behavioural practices, purchasing policy and transport, and can take anything from a couple of days up to 10 to complete, the average being four days. The external expert organisation then returns in one years' time to review progress and report on changes. In addition to grant-holders being able to access this service, any third sector organisation^[1], can apply for this free audit. While the impact of each individual eco audit is known findings are not evaluated on a comparative basis hence there are no analysis on what type of quantified improvement the organisations have benefitted from as a result of taking part. However, a few years ago a New Economics Foundation (NEF) research project was commissioned to examine the overall value of this 'eco audit' programme and reported back recommending they continue with the scheme.

Welsh European Funding Organisation – WEFO is part of the Welsh government and manages the delivery of the EU Structural Funds programmes in Wales, and they include a cross cutting theme of *Sustainable Development* in everything they do. Their new funding period started in 2014 and runs to 2020. There is a great deal of documentation and guidance on their website to help people understand what it means to them if they were to get a grant. There are a number of actions regarding environmental sustainability that the grant-holders are required to address; typically they must have a Sustainable Development strategy, leading to an environmental policy and an eco

^[1] With a few provisos that larger, well-funded third sector organisations, such as the larger social housing charities for eg, are not eligible for the free audit



code, that should to be displayed prominently in the organisation's premises to remind staff of the actions they should adopt to conserve resources and act in an eco-friendly manner. WEFO provide templates for these areas, but the code should be drawn up by the organisation and be specific for their operations so that it remains relevant. There are Sustainable Development Advisors within WEFO who advise and guide the grant holders to ensure they are achieving these requirements.

Heritage Lottery Fund - HLF have environmental requirements attached to their grant-making, however the scale of the requirements are dependent on the size of the grant. They have 'Greener Projects' guidance information resources and advice on the website that is open to all grant-holders to use. In 2013 they introduced further requirements that they call the 'Outcome' approach. There is a list of 14 outcomes that HLF have chosen. For smaller sized grants, to around £10k, the grant-holders can pick one outcome, from the list of 14, which they have to deliver. Whereas for projects at the £2 million plus level all 14 outcomes have to be delivered. These outcomes, and how they will be achieved, are described by the grant holder, and the case officer then assesses them on a Low, Medium or High rating. An example of an outcome would be, under the Communities strand, 'Environmental Impacts will be reduced', however the Outcomes are not solely environmentally related, they are concerned with 'outcomes' across the environmental and social sustainability landscape.

Additionally, for the larger grant holder, again £2million plus, the grant-holder must complete a carbon calculator that has been created for the purpose. HLF pays for the calculator to be available to the grant holders and also for support to the grant holder in filling in the calculator.

They are also currently working, with RSPB, on testing a climate change adaptation tool for biodiversity issues. They are trialling it on three funded projects. It is a scenario planning tool and focuses on raising awareness of the issues of a changing climate for biodiversity and how to integrate these issues into future funding requests and work plans.

NCVO - NCVO's work has, most recently, focused on adaptation, rather than mitigation, issues with its voluntary and other third sector organisations. This work was funded through Baring Foundation, City Bridge Trust, Defra and Environment Agency. It primarily engaged in raising awareness of issue and risks associated with a changing climate, in particular flooding, with a wide range of organisations. The main finding was that adaptation and associated risks had not been considered or planned for in almost all the organisations they worked with. Three strands to the work: awareness raising, helping them develop their arguments against climate sceptics and then helping them prepare for the issues and responses needed. This project has now finished as the funding has ceased. There are also online resources⁷ on this issue, these are timetabled to be refreshed and updated over the next year.

⁷ <http://www.scribd.com/doc/197669644/Climate-change-engagement-resources-for-voluntary-organisations>

Case study 2 - The Arts Council England Environmental Reporting programme 2012-15

In 2012, Arts Council England made the decision to fundamentally embed environmental sustainability considerations into their grant-giving, they were the first arts funding body in the world to do this. Their funded National portfolio organisations (NPO) and Major partner museums (MPM) and Bridge organisations, their main funding portfolio consisting of over 700 arts and creativity based organisations, were chosen to pilot this programme. This is a revenue funding programme with grants typically awarded over a three year period. From 2012-15, as a funding agreement requirement rather than a funding decision criterion, each organisation as required to report annually on its energy and water use. However, organisations could go further if they wished and report on waste, transport, production and other environmental impacts that were pertinent to their operations. Each organisation also had to develop both an environmental policy and action plan.

To achieve this the Arts Council engaged expert external help to provide the tools, resources and support to the organisations. Through a tender process, Julie's Bicycle, a charity whose mission is to assist the creative sector in its journey to sustainability, was chosen to provide this support. Julie's Bicycle had already developed a bespoke carbon calculator for the creative industries and hence it was a straightforward task to adapt this existing toolkit for the needs of the Arts Council. The first two years of this programme have now been evaluated both qualitatively and quantitatively, and the results are impressive:

- By end of year two, 98% of all organisations were engaged with the process, this is up from 89% in year one – in itself an impressive result for a first year.
- 85% now have an environmental policy and action plan in place, this is up from around two thirds of all organisation in year one

Moreover, the benefits seen by the organisations that consider themselves engaged, or very engaged, with the process are not solely environmental in nature. They have financial and social benefits too:

- Over half, 56%, reported financial benefits through reduced utility bills, with 16% of these reporting them to be substantial
- 52% reported reputational benefits
- 73%, nearly three quarters, reported increases in team morale as a result of engagement

If we turn to the monetary and carbon savings seen in the first two years of reporting, although it is to be borne in mind that a reduction target was not set as part of this programme, only a recording of consumption, we see that there have been significant savings:

- £1.25 million was saved by 490 organisations collectively in 2013/14
- The amount of carbon equivalent (CO₂e) saved was over 7,000 tonnes
- Over two thirds of organisations reported reductions in gas, electricity and/or water usage

The first three years of the project completed in March 2015, with the third year results due in the autumn. However, the Art Council has already instigated the second three year phase of this programme, and has taken the learnings from the first phase to refine and deepen the engagement aspects of the project. In particular:

- It is providing extra help and support to 24 organisations committed to action on environmental sustainability. Over the three years ACE and Julie's Bicycle will work with them to scale up sustainable solutions, encourage peer exchange and inspire others and to increase ambition
- Reporting requirements for organisations have been finessed. Some reporting categories make more sense to some organisations than others - thus, some (usually larger) organisations will be reporting on more than before whereas some of the smaller (eg with no access to utility bills) will not be required to report at all. However, all are still expected to possess a working policy and action plan.
- Julie's Bicycle will also be working with Arts Council to look at other aspects of their funding programmes and work; for example by providing resources for applicants to the Capital Programme.



6. Environmental Sustainability interventions in grant-making – state of the art

The amalgamation of learnings from the internal and external investigations has led to the development of a spectrum of interventions that range from a ‘light touch,’ information delivery based approach, all the way to the other extreme which is characterised as an bespoke, intense intervention, facilitated by environmental experts, on an individual project/organisational basis. This section describes the range of approaches, and provides examples of each method as uncovered by the research, it describes the pros and cons of each, with an indication of costs where that information was available.

6.1 Spectrum of environmental sustainability interventions

From the research undertaken a broad grouping of the various approaches to interventions can be made. There are six main categories to embedding environmental considerations, which vary from a light touch, one-size-fits-all approach through to embedded, bespoke interventions that are deeply personalised to the individual projects. The six variations are described below:

1. Information Resources

This is considered the lightest touch intervention and consists of both hard copy and internet based resources available for the use of Applicants or Grant Holders, or is general advice that is available to all. This is the most popular form of intervention for the grant-makers, with evidence of this approach seen in around a dozen examples both in the UK and internationally. This ranges from signposting to external expert organisations’ information resources as in Esmee Fairbairn’s linking to advice on sustainable food sourcing from Sustain, through to bespoke advice and information contained on the grant giver’s website such as the resources to be found on the Captain Planet’s website.

2. Application Form Questions

The second level of intervention is the requirement for Applicants to supply some form of data and/or information on the application form. This intervention ranges from the simple, tick box, closed form of question that enquires into whether the Applicant has considered their environmental impact, whether they have an environmental policy/action plan or whether they already have certain procedures / certifications / accreditations in place. Another example described is an open form type question where the Applicant is free to describe their approach to environmental sustainability – although this question was not taken into consideration in the assessment of the application form. Through the research process we did not uncover any evidence that any application form questions regarding environmental sustainability were assessed in any way, or made a material difference to the outcome of the evaluation process. Instead, the addition of any environmentally focused questions was seen as more of an ‘awareness raising’, rather than an evaluation, exercise. An example of this is the Calouste Gulbenkian ‘Open fund’ application form question, where they ask an open question of their applicants where they are asked to describe how they have taken environmental sustainability into account in their projects. An internal Big Lottery Fund example is a series of questions on the Community Asset Transfer 2 (CAT2) scheme application form. These questions, in the form of a checklist, have to be addressed for the application to be considered.

3. Grant Criteria

This level of intervention adds particular requirements to the offer of a grant. This approach can be closely linked to the level 4 Requirement for Action, as in the case of the Art Council England’s



approach, or it can be linked to the requirement that future grant holders need to satisfy the criteria in the grant offer letter *before* receiving funding. An example of this approach can be seen in Big Lottery Fund's Community Asset Transfer fund, where there are criteria set out in the application form that the applicant has to fulfil before the funding agreement can be finalised, for example the CAT2 application form asks for evidence that the sustainability of the asset has been assessed. Apart from the Community Asset Transfer fund there are elements of environmental sustainability in the day to day work of the capital projects team as they ensure that buildings which are supported by The Fund are constructed and refurbished to meet the building regulations. This process means that there are improvements to the energy performance of supported buildings however it is the building regulations that are primarily driving this improvement rather than The Fund.

4. Requirement for Action

This approach requires the grant holder to take specific action through the lifetime of the project. For example, with the Arts Council England there is an annual requirement to report on energy and water usage, as well as the need to have an environmental policy and action plan. Similarly for European funds administered by WEFO, there is a range of Sustainable Development requirements that must be fulfilled. With the Heritage Lottery Fund, dependent on the size of the grant, a number of pre-determined 'Outcomes' must be fulfilled by the end of the funding period these are assessed by HLF grant managers.

5. External Evaluation

This approach uses external expert help to assist the grant-maker to assess the environmental performance of the grantee, it is often accompanied by expert help (intervention 6) but can be a stand-alone intervention, where the grant-maker contracts an external organisation to audit/evaluate the progress/performance of an organisation during or at the end of a funding cycle or project. The only example of this approach found through this research is demonstrated in the Arts Council England programme where they contracted an external organisation who specialises in environmental sustainability in the creative sector, Julie's Bicycle – a small charity, to provide the tools for the funded organisations to report on their energy and water use, this information is then evaluated and reported on at the end of each financial year.

6. Expert Help

This intervention is, by its nature, more individualised and bespoke to the funded projects. This type of approach has been trialled by The Fund in a number of ways over the past decade, City Bridge Trust uses external expert help to work with their grant-holders to help them come up with a personalised plan to help them reduce their environmental impact, and, in one of the most unusual examples, the Australian Council for the Arts has a 'Greenie in Residence' post that is embedded with individual organisations to help them improve their impacts. It can be partnered with an evaluation process at the end of the project or on an annual basis (as in Intervention 5) this is seen in the Arts Council example, or can simply consist of help and guidance to the organisation through the project lifetime with no subsequent evaluation of its outcomes, as in the City Bridge Trust eco audit scheme.

The Spectrum

The following diagram illustrates the range of interventions, grouped into the six 'pillars' of activity type and examples of practice in the area is depicted by the logo of the grant-maker who has shown evidence of utilising the approach.



Figure 2 Range of intervention methods for embedding environmental consideration into grant-making & examples of grant-makers who undertake the methods

6.2 Summary tables of environmental sustainability interventions

A table summarising all of the identified approaches can be seen in Tables 2a, 2b and 2c on the following pages. The medium of engagement categorises the form of the intervention. For example is it information delivery based, or a personal one-to-one interaction with the grant-holder? There are seven categories:

- Signposting or web content (broadcast mechanism, open to all)
- Application form (grant applicant communicating to grant-maker)
- Online tool (grant holder gets support from automated web tool)
- Email or telephone support (personal communication, asynchronous engagement, 1-2-1)
- Webinars or workshops (personal communication, synchronous engagement, 1-2-many)
- Face-to-face visits (individual, synchronous engagement)
- Part time/full time, individualised help (bespoke, in-depth engagement with projects)

The interventions are categorised by theme where we have indicated the type of environmental aspect that is addressed through the intervention covering CO₂, energy, waste, travel, materials, water, food, biodiversity and adaptation. This is a broad estimation of the topics covered from the evidence gathered on the websites, there may very well be other areas covered that we were not made aware of.

Organisation	Intervention	Country	Medium of Engagement	Themes									
				CO2	Energy	Waste	Travel	Materials	Water	Food	Biodiversity	Adaptation	
Information Resources													
Ashden	Share know-how through winners network, web resources	UK	Signposting / Web Content	x	x								
Barrow Cadbury	Highlight changes grantees have made, checklist of actions, signposts to audits	UK	Signposting / Web Content	x	x	x	x						
Big Lottery Fund	Web based Sustainable development information and checklist	UK	Signposting / Web content	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Church Commissioners of England	Free energy audit tool, step by step guide to energy efficiency, advice on sustainability	UK	Signposting / Web Content	x	x	x	x						
Esmee Fairbairn	Signposts grant holders to resource on sustainable food	UK	Signposting / Web Content								x		
Heritage Lottery Fund	Published good practice guide	UK	Signposting / Web Content	x	x	x	x	x					
Landfill Communities Fund	Advice on energy efficiency in community buildings, downloadable toolkit, audits	UK	Signposting / Web Content	x	x	x		x	x				
NCVO	Encourages VCOs to prepare for climate change impacts	UK	Signposting / Web Content										x
SITA Trust	Produced a 'Green Guide' for grant applicants	UK	Signposting / Web Content										
Captain Planet Foundation	Educator resources, sustainability toolkit and plan, best practice guide	USA	Signposting / Web Content		x							x	
Welsh European Funding Office	Publishes guidance and tools on environmental sustainability	UK	Signposting / Web Content	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Table 2a Comparison of Information Resources Interventions

Organisation	Intervention	Country	Medium of Engagement	Themes									
				CO2	Energy	Waste	Travel	Materials	Water	Food	Biodiversity	Adaptation	
Application Form Questions													
Calouste Gulbenkian	Asks applicants to comment on their approach to environmental sustainability	UK	Application Form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
City Bridge Trust	Asks applicants how they are taking steps to reduce their carbon footprint	UK	Application Form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cory Environmental	Asks if applicants have considered energy efficiency measures and environmental benefits of the project	UK	Application Form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Landfill Communities Fund	Expects applicants to have considered their environmental impact	UK	Application Form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
SITA Trust	Asks applicants how they are reducing their environmental impact	UK	Application Form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Waste Recycling Network	Applicants should demonstrate how environmental impact of project is minimised	UK	Application Form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Grant Criteria													
Big lottery Fund	Applicants must complete a checklist of actions regarding the fabric of the community asset (CAT2)	UK	Application Form	x	x	x	x	x					x
Waste Recycling Network	Projects applying for energy efficiency measures must have had an energy audit	UK	Face to Face Visit		x								
Requirement for Action													
Heritage Lottery Fund	Grant holder must satisfy a number of stated Outcomes – Number of Outcomes dependent on funding	UK	Face to Face Visit	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x
Arts Council England	Grant holders must collect environmental data, produce environmental policy and action plan	UK	Online Tool		x	x	x			x			

Table 2b Comparison of Application Form Question, Grant Criteria and Requirement for Action Interventions

Organisation	Intervention	Country	Medium of Engagement	Themes								
				CO2	Energy	Waste	Travel	Materials	Water	Food	Biodiversity	Adaptation
External Evaluation												
Arts Council England	Third party contractor is used to quantify and report footprints of grant holders	UK	Online Tool	x	x						x	
Expert Help												
Arts Council England	Contractor provides technical help and support to grant holders through workshops and webinars	UK	Webinars / Workshops	x	x	x	x				x	
Big Lottery Fund	Programme of student placements helps organisations improve environmental performance	UK	Part Time / Full Time Support	x	x	x	x				x	
Big Lottery Fund	Contractor supported grant holders to review environmental practices, understand impacts	UK	Part Time / Full Time Individualised Help	x	x	x	x				x	
Heritage Lottery Fund	Pays for external experts to help its grant holders (£2mill+) to complete the carbon calculator tool	UK	Online Tool/individual help	x	x							
City Bridge Trust	Funds free eco audits by external experts	UK	Face to Face Visit	x	x	x	x				x	
Environment Wales	In-house Development Officers provide support at each stage of the project	UK	Email / Telephone Support									
Australia Council for the Arts	Expert is embedded in arts organisations to help them improve their environmental performance	AUS	Part Time / Full Time Support	x	x	x	x				x	
Welsh European Funding Office	In-house sustainable development experts help grant holders fulfil the grant requirements	UK	Email / Telephone Support	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Table 2c Comparison of External Evaluation and Expert Help Interventions

7. Recommendations

7.1 Overall Approach to introducing environmental sustainability in grant-making

Below we have set out our recommendations for a general approach which we feel would be worthwhile The Fund following in order to develop a programme of sustainability support throughout its operations. The approach is a gradual one which aims to develop the programme over a number of years rather than trying to cover all bases at once from the outset.

We have started by making a series of broad recommendations about how to tackle this programme and then we go into more detail about each of the approaches described in the Spectrum.

Ensure that your own house is in order - The Fund must demonstrate that it is committed to its own environmental sustainability if it is to influence its grant holders in this area. Sustained improvements in The Fund's environmental impact will be critically important to be able to demonstrate that it 'practices what it preaches'.

Allocate Adequate Resources – A crucial consideration that The Fund needs to recognise is that this type of programme will take a number of years to develop, launch, embed and grow, and adequate resources (both human and financial) must be dedicated in order to allow it to embed and become normalised throughout its funded portfolio. It will take time and effort to set it up and, further time and effort for it to gain traction, but once it does it could bring years of benefits to The Fund's supported organisations.

Build Internal Support - This initiative will require support throughout the organisation. The Board needs to be fully behind it, the Senior Management Team needs to support it in terms of overall direction and in terms of resource allocation, the Directorates all need to understand its relevance to them and give it their backing and the Green Champions team should also have an important part to play to raise its profile throughout the organisation. Minimising the additional burden on Funding staff and other affected colleagues will help gain buy-in internally.

Build External Support - This research has highlighted that there is clearly a strong desire amongst other funding bodies to implement some form of environmental support within their operations and these other organisations may be willing to support this initiative financially, through pooled staffing, sharing know-how and expertise or some other in-kind support. At the very least it would be beneficial to build up a network of keen individuals within the most interested funding bodies who may help with ideas and feedback, set up a Community of Interest within the grant-making community, potentially under the auspices of the Environmental Funders Network – however it must be clear that the Community is not exclusively for environmental funders otherwise buy-in may be limited.

Identify Barriers Early – Some potential barriers to implementing these ideas have been raised during this project, so it would be worthwhile to identify what additional barriers might appear as the programme develops. For example, explore the challenges which devolution could pose so that you don't meet any unexpected surprises further down the line. Arguably it could be said that Wales and Scotland are more tuned in to the sustainability agenda than England or Northern Ireland (which could mean approaching and trialling approaches in Wales and Scotland first and then expand to England and Northern Ireland? Or it could mean the other way around).

Build Up a Picture of your Grant Holders - The diversity of grant holders which The Fund supports will make the development of an effective support programme challenging so for each grant programme try and build up a picture of what your grant holders look like (e.g. size of



organisation, types of activity, sources of environmental impact, sources of cost etc). Without having a good idea about the kinds of organisations which The Fund supports it will be difficult to tailor the approaches.

Talk to your Grant Holders – The scope of this project did not extend as far as talking directly with The Fund’s grant holders but it would be a very useful step for The Fund to take. Find out what aspects of environmental sustainability your grant holders are struggling with most, or indeed, if they have even considered environmental issues to be of any relevance to them.

Establish Support Thresholds – Make the programme intelligent, i.e. the support should be proportionate to the size of the grant. Work out what level of grant funding should have requirements attached. Below this threshold the emphasis should be on support and encouragement, above this threshold you could start to bring in requirements and/or targets. This threshold could vary from programme to programme.

Rank the Impacts - List all areas of environmental sustainability which The Fund could help influence and then rank them, taking into account the potential for environmental wins and the impact on grant holders’ financial sustainability. Some impacts may generate relatively small impacts environmentally but have a disproportionate impact on energy bills. Keep in mind that this ranking may vary between grant programmes or between small, medium and large grant holders.

Work With Partners – A number of the grant-makers we interviewed have used external experts/partners to help them deliver their interventions, and on the whole this approach has been found to be very effective, for e.g. Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund and The Fund itself. Hence if this is an approach that is to be considered it will be vital to find partners to work with and/or who are experts in sustainability and community organisations (this won’t necessarily be a single organisation but could be multiple organisations specialising in one or the other).

Don’t Just Rely on the Usual Suspects - Provide the core information that grant holders will need (including the worthy stuff that’s been heard before) but make sure this is supplemented with fresh, innovative support that captures the attention.

Start Simple – Using the ranking, go for the big hits (environmentally and financial), then as the programme develops you can add other components to keep building momentum and broadening the scope of your support.

Get the Framing Right - Make sure that the programme is framed correctly for the different types of organisation which you fund. Quite simply. Getting the framing right will lead to much better buy-in from a far broader range of organisations. For example, a socially focused organisation may not respond to environmental arguments but might respond to financial arguments.

Test your Ideas - If possible, try and quickly test or get feedback on your options for intervention, but don’t get bogged down in endless trials and pilots that never end up being deployed on a wider scale.

Capture Data - Make sure that during all phases of the support programme you capture good quality data which allows you to assess whether different approaches work or not and whether the programme is having an impact. A balance must be struck between how much data is captured and the effort required to capture this data but the more data that can be captured the better. It is quite possible that this data won’t immediately be analysed but it should still be captured as it is likely that it will be of use in the future and it is usually impossible to capture this data after the event. According to interviews with members of the Capital Support Unit there could be a wealth of data out there which could be captured to build a comprehensive database of energy use in funded buildings however there is currently no process in place to make this happen.



Use your stature to secure good deals for your funded organisations – One idea raised during the internal interviews was that The Fund has a substantial amount of influence and, potentially, purchasing power. This could be leveraged to secure good value deals for low carbon or energy efficiency technologies or services that could be applied on a large scale rather than having funded projects attempt to secure these products or services on an individual basis.

Consider the Lifetime of Resources - If developing information resources, such as toolkits, briefings, case studies etc., consider their useful lifetime. Can they be designed so that they don't slip out of date too quickly and need to be refreshed? This will keep costs down.

Look Beyond the Project – The Fund's support tends to focus on projects rather than the organisations but the support programme should aim to have as big an impact as possible on the organisation as a whole. Restricting the support to improving the environmental sustainability of a project may only have a limited impact on the environmental sustainability of the organisation running the project.

Look Beyond the Organisation - Explore whether there is scope for The Fund helping grant holders to support their beneficiaries. This may be too much to take on in the early years but should be considered further down the line

Be Flexible – Not every grant holder is going to jump on board straight away and some may never do so. A lot of energy and time can be wasted trying to get reluctant parties involved and the last thing that The Fund wants is to be viewed by its grant holders as a sustainability taskmaster. A degree of flexibility should be incorporated into the design of the programme in order to allow for this.

Open up Access - Consider making resources freely available to all, not just grant holders, but it's always worth trying to capture information about who is using the resources and for what purposes.

7.2 The spectrum of interventions – recommendations for The Fund

Here we list each of the six intervention approaches and discuss their suitability within the current and short-term future of The Fund's strategic direction and funding environment:

1. Information provision

This could consist of Big Lottery Fund-commissioned information and advice provision that is hosted in a dedicated area of The Fund's website that is well signposted and advertised. Alternatively it could be a sign-posting service where The Fund curates a listing of the most authoritative, externally authored information and advice provision and direct their applicants / grant-holders to it.

Pros

- Inclusive – open for all applicants and grant holders to access
- Relatively inexpensive to produce (on a cost per use basis)
- Helpful for projects and individuals who are starting from a very low environmental literacy base
- Will not impact grant-holders through additional administrative burden

Cons

- Impact could be relatively low and difficult to evaluate
- Much information already in existence, is it worth potentially duplicating?



- Issue of currency and relevance. Certain aspect of information provision date quickly, hence there would have to be a dedicated, ongoing provision of checking and updating the information assets
- If curating external information then the same idea applies, there would have to be a resource to check these external sources and update on a regular basis

Recommendation

We do recommend that The Fund explores this approach further, but ideally in conjunction with one or more other intervention types. This approach can work as a sole intervention, i.e. if The Fund decides only to provide information and guidance, however it will also be an important aspect if any of the other, more requirement-based approaches are introduced as the grant-holders will need help and advice to fulfil any requirements.

This is the lightest touch intervention, however, if through this project The Fund is seen to be paving the way for other grant makers in this area, then a respected, authoritative toolkit of information and advice, prominently displayed and easily navigable on The Fund's website, could become the main sign-posted source of authoritative information for other grant makers in the future. Hence reducing the burden on other smaller, resource-constrained grant-makers to produce their own guidance and advice.

2. Application questions

This could manifest as a series of closed, tick-box type questions which requires the applicant to confirm, or otherwise, that they have certain policies /procedures in place with respect to environmental impacts. Alternatively, it could be an open question, asked in a broad way, for e.g. 'What considerations have you made regarding the environmental impact of your activities', that the applicant has to respond to in any way appropriate to their situation. These questions could be scored and evaluated, or they could simply be for information, with no formal marking of the responses.

Pros

- Requires the applicants, at an early stage, to consider their impact on the environment and what they are personally doing to minimise it
- Awareness raising that the grant-funder is placing importance on such issues
- Relatively inexpensive to add questions to an application form
- Helpful as a further metric with which to score and evaluate the applicant
- In particularly circumstances, i.e. capital grants, gives the applicant a clear steer to the importance of environmental considerations in building works (new build and retrofit)

Cons

- A negative impact could be that some organisations/individuals are put off applying to the fund
- If it is a simple tick box exercise that is not evaluated, then impact could be low
- If the environmental questions are not scored or evaluated in any way, then the usefulness of the approach is diminished
- Difficult to assess its impact as an intervention

Recommendation

We do not recommend that The Fund explores this approach further for general grant Application forms. Adding further questions to application forms will only increase the burden on the applicant, and if the questions are not to be scored, evaluated or officially taken into consideration in any other way, then we question the relevance of having them. In particular, with the direction of travel within



The Fund being that application forms will be getting shorter and simpler, then the suggestion of an additional section for environmentally related questions becomes more inappropriate.

However, an exception to this general recommendation is for any capital funding programmes. The Fund has already used a series of highly focused environmental questions on its Community Asset Transfer (CAT2) funding schemes in Wales. These are highly appropriate and in our view necessary for the type of funding being awarded, and hence we would recommend that the same approach, or even an enhanced version, is rolled out across all Big Lottery Fund capital funding schemes in future.

Another potential exception would be any environmentally specific funding programmes that The Fund may run in the future (although we are aware that currently the Fund does not have a dedicated 'environmental' theme to its funding strategy). Naturally if there are funding streams that focus on environmental themes, then it would be sensible and appropriate to add specific questions regarding environmental sustainability to the application process.

3. Grant decision criteria

This places a requirement on the potential grant-holder to fulfil some requirement(s) as part of the T&Cs of the grant offer letter. This could be that the grant holder carries out a survey of some type on their building or land; or that they have to provide proof that they have certain required documentation, certification or other accreditation that they alluded to on the application form.

Pros

- Allows the funder to have a certain amount of confidence that the potential grant-holder takes environmental considerations seriously and has taken action before the funding is awarded
- Provides the grant-maker with quantified evidence of action
- Helpful for projects and individuals to take the environment seriously within their project (if otherwise it would not be a priority internally)

Cons

- Could be an obstacle for a number of socially focused organisations who could not meet the criteria set, or would require an amount of extra effort to meet them that is disproportionate to the project

Recommendation

We do not generally recommend that The Fund explores this approach further. It is unlikely that The Fund, as a social grant maker would make any pre-project funding demands on their potential grant-holders, hence this seems an unlikely and inappropriate intervention for The Fund to pursue generally.

Again, the exemption to this is the capital funded projects where a condition of the funding may well include particular requirements for the applicant to fulfil before monies are released (for e.g. as a direct outcome of particular questions added to the Application form), and also for any environmentally specific funding streams where the requirement for an environmental audit, or other assessment, is completed as part of the Terms & conditions of receiving the grant.

4. Requirements for action

This approach requires the grant-holders to undertake certain activities and/or put in place certain measures through the lifetime of the project. This could be the filling in of a carbon calculator provide by the grant-maker, the production of an environmental policy, the instigation of an annual



action plan and/or targets to reduce particular resource use (energy, water, waste, travel) over an annual or lifetime of project basis.

Pros

- A rigorous approach that can be easily quantified
- Impact can be high
- Action, on behalf of the grant-holders, is guaranteed
- Helpful for projects to greatly enhance their environmental literacy and understanding of their own impact

Cons

- Potentially relatively expensive to undertake
- Will be an administrative overhead to be borne by the grant-maker as well as the grant-holder

Recommendation

We recommend that The Fund explores this approach further. However, consideration has to be given to the size of the grant awarded and the nature of the project. It also has to be borne in mind that, if extra requirements are to be borne by the grant-holders then it would be essential to also put in place a series of support interventions to help grant holders who are potentially unequipped / inexperienced to fulfil these requirements. At the very least, there should be a toolkit of information, advice and case studies developed and hosted by The Fund to provide them with guidance as to how to fulfil the requirements. Depending on the level of demand there might also be a case to provide personal expert advice to the grant-holders also.

For capital grants, and in particular, new built capital projects, there could be a requirement for the building to come up to BREEAM 'Excellent' rating for example, and/or they should commit to implementing an environmental management system (EMS) into the property.

5. External evaluation

It is only sensible to consider this intervention if implemented alongside an approach that requires action on behalf of the grant holder. If a requirement for action resulted in policies and procedures being produced, and/or data gathered, or targets set for reduction in resource use, then, in order to assess the effectiveness of the intervention, some type of evaluation is required. This is where an external expert in environmental assessment, sent in to calculate and evaluate the project's progress, could be a useful approach. Of course, this assessment could be achieved using internal staff, for e.g. the grant officers could be trained to evaluate adherence to the requirements as part of their normal progress checks. If this approach is used then staff training is a pre-requisite.

Pros

- A rigorous approach that results in robust quantification of outcomes
- Impact can be high
- Action, on behalf of the grant-holders, is guaranteed
- Sense of objectivity as the evaluation is undertaken by an expert third party

Cons

- Relatively expensive to undertake
- Can be seen as a heavy-handed, 'green policing' intervention

Recommendation



We recommend that The Fund explores this approach further, however it is only relevant in conjunction with further exploration of 'Requirement for Action'. Again however, consideration has to be given to the size of the grant awarded and the nature of the project to be evaluated.

6. Expert help

Here expert external help in the form of environmental professionals, auditors and /or consultants are contracted by The Fund to provide help, advice, data collection and/or evaluation services to the grant-holders

Pros

- A personalised approach that results in bespoke help and advice for the grant-holder
- Impact can be high
- Action, on behalf of the grant-holders, is highly probable
- In some cases the benefits may extend beyond the boundaries of the project and indirectly benefit the project's beneficiaries too

Cons

- Potentially relatively expensive to undertake
- Will be an administrative overhead to be borne by the grant-maker as there will be a coordination role to undertake
- Potential quality control issues with the individual 'experts' contracted
- Without a robust evaluation plan, quantified outcomes may be difficult to calculate

Recommendation

We recommend that The Fund explores this approach further. However, again consideration has to be given to the size of the grant awarded and the nature of the project. For the smaller scale grant, the cost of such an intervention might outweigh the potential benefit seen by the grant-holder.



8. Conclusion

This research project has unearthed a number of pockets of good and best practice in the area of embedding environmental sustainability into the grant-making process. However, it has also uncovered a degree of untapped and unacted upon enthusiasm and good will, across the grant-making landscape, to do more in this area, but there appears to be a lack of coherent leadership to change the status quo.

What appears to be lacking, in the UK grant-making sector, is a trail-blazing grant awarding body that can do the same for general grant-making as the Art Council England has done to embed environmental sustainability in grant-making in the creative sector.

It could be argued that The Big Lottery Fund, as a large publically funded grant-maker, is well-suited to be that trail-blazer in the UK. The scale and scope of its funding activities give it the opportunity and ability to trial a number of initiatives, to fit its wide range of grant-making activities, to test how different approaches could work for small, medium and large grant awards and projects.

The time now seems right for the Big Lottery Fund to take the lead on this issue. The Arts Council England has, over the last three years, successfully embedded environmental sustainability in its revenue funded portfolio of over 700 organisations. The intervention consisted of the requirement for all funded organisations to report on their energy and water usage annually, and also to produce both an environmental policy and an annual action plan. The results to date are impressive, in the second year of the programme, organisations collectively reported savings of £1.25 million in their utility bills, 98% of organisations self-reported themselves to be engaged with the programme, over half (56%) reported financial benefits, 52% reported reputational benefits and 73% reported staff morale benefits as a result in participating in the programme. The Arts Council is now embarking in the second phase of the programme, with an enhanced ambition to reward and support the 'leaders' in their sector that have emerged from the first phase of the programme.

There is a further piece of work to be done to identify exactly how and what a suitable set of interventions for The Fund's diverse funded portfolio will look like, as a 'one size fits all' approach will not work in this situation. However, from the evidence assembled within this report, the proposition to embed environmental sustainability into general grant-making within The Fund's range of funded programmes, appears a sound and realistic endeavor and the timing right to begin to put in place a strategy to enable this to be rolled out in the new phase of the general strategic framework over the next five years.