
Sharing of insight and undertaking collaborative problem solving regarding identified challenges around accessibility of support services for young people in order to develop systems and resources to help youth workers navigate external support services

Data Suites

3.6


data and other evidence, focussing especially on rural needs, which would be a valuable resource to guide strategic and operational planning in the learning and employability fields.

Grant Programme Framework

3.7 A further outcome was the production of a Framework for designing and managing a small grants programme drawing on the experience of managing and delivering the Strand 1 programme. The scheme focused on allocating grants to organisations and businesses that offer activities that support the unemployed to make their next steps towards work or education, or to engage with the benefits system.

Independent Partner Manager

3.8 Devon Communities Together (DCT), which has worked with Petroc on past training and unemployment programmes, was commissioned to manage and facilitate the collaborative work amongst partners for Strands 2, 4 and 6. DCT was also engaged to provide capacity building support for the Strand 1 Grants programme and undertake the delivery of Strand 5 (Rural Understanding).



Analysing data collected by Petroc as part of the required monitoring and reporting processes.

Being proportionate in our requests for data and feedback from and discussions with partners and grant recipients given their limited capacity and the reporting

5.2 The IYC Project Application noted that each Strand of the project was designed to develop and pilot provision which will generate lessons and recommendations for

6 Em1KCommunity

	<p>15 organisations secured a grant</p> <p>17 grants were awarded (3 organisations received 2 grants for additional/follow on project activity)</p> <p>8 organisations withdrew their applications or were declined</p> <p>Total of £250,000 in grants provided</p> <p>230 individual beneficiaries were engaged by grantees.</p> <p>7 innovation plans were developed</p> <p>10 knowledge transfer activities and collaborations were developed</p> <p>2 Feasibility studies were undertaken</p> <p>3 Decarbonisation Plans were developed</p>
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Strand 1 Impact Review

Process

6.2 Generally grant recipients were content with the grant application process, clarity of criteria and communication and relationship with the team at Petroc.

“Petroc were excellent – very organised, very supportive, the paperwork was simple for participants, with pre-set guidelines, very manageable”

6.3 However, most flagged the challenges associated with the short timescale between being awarded a grant and expected start date. This was difficult for most grant recipients but was especially problematic for those who were awarded a grant relatively late in the process. The main implication of the tight timescale was the lack of time available for engaging and recruiting beneficiaries. The confirmed extension of the whole IYC project came too late to enable some grant recipients to extend their project activity over a longer and more appropriate period.

6.4 Some grant recipients specifically reported they would have liked to work with beneficiaries over a longer period. However, they were aware of the timeframe they were signing up to.

6.5 Some commented that the personal information required from participants (especially NI numbers) was intrusive and discouraged and possibly prevented some people from participating.

“The application process was pretty straightforward, pretty solid. But the level of questioning to the participants in the questionnaires about National Insurance, benefits etc was too intrusive, it put several people off getting involved. It was too personalised – there wouldn’t have been objections if some of that information had been anonymised.”

6.6 The monitoring and reporting processes and information required of grant recipients was accepted by the major.0000022/0 0 196-BDC qencepr0.000008875 0 59 595.56 84

reports, innovation plans, case studies and other submitted material and these provide a rich source of learning and insight which should be made available to those working in the employability field.

Project Design and Management

6.8 We were also impr

recipients made specific attempts to connect with the social prescribing system, and in certain cases this was successful in reaching 54266250731206264 reW*5.56 8470 e(36-4*

6.14 Almost all projects were operating in and seeking to engage beneficiaries from predominantly rural and in some cases relatively remote areas. This posed challenges for the organisations who were seeking to reach people who were less connected with or able to access existing employability support and who were more likely to be socially and geographically isolated.

6.15 On 5.56842.046 in W&B highlighted that the 90462818Twe go 6(On)-5(e)-3()8(p)-3(roje)-2(5

with grant recipients was primarily as a grant funder with a focus on ensuring the process of managing applications, grant agreements, payments and reporting was handled effectively.

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“The women we are working with are socially excluded, marginalised; those women often don’t feel able to access opportunities, they need support sometimes.”

6.25 Several projects were based around supporting people to develop their skills, confidence, employment and enterprise opportunities in the arts and cultural field. As well as providing valuable support to individuals, collectively these projects demonstrate the economic potential of the arts sector to help create income, jobs and enterprises, especially in rural areas.

“This project has given us an enhanced profile... we have been included in the North Devon Cultural Strategy – on working parties, steering groups etc and long-term we hope that money coming into the region will therefore be targeted at those artists that we’ve been working with.”

Impact for Beneficiaries

6.26 Evidence of the difference the activities supported through the Employability Grants Devon programme has made for individual beneficiaries is provided through the participant data, narrative reports, case studies and other material submitted by grant recipients, feedback obtained through evaluation interviews with a sample of organisations.

6.27 *what [beneficiaries] are doing following the support [they] have received from this project* Of the 230 participants engaged in strand 1, 115 have achieved at least one outcome.

Post Project Activity	number	percentage
In education or training	33	14.35%
In employment or self-employment	17	7.4%
Engaged in life skills or volunteering	69	30%
Engaged in job search	18	7.8%%
Newly in receipt of benefits/planning for benefits	12	5.22%
Total (for whom data available)	149	

6.28 It is clear from the evidence we have reviewed that the activities supported through the grants programme have had a significant difference especially around

of support and opportunities available and greater connectedness with organisations and their community of place and/or interest.

6.29 The following comments from evaluation interviews and grant recipient reports illustrate the ways in which the programme has impacted positively on the lives of individuals.

“As a result, two people have set up a new company in Northam, where they now have a gallery and do framing for artists. 2 others – a glassmaker and printmaker are working together and did an exhibition together this summer in Ilfracombe.”

“We have records for 8 people who went on to do courses at the Phoenix. People have gone on to further education, volunteering, courses and have sold some of their work “

“We are in contact with some of the women who came on the course; they have gone on to do certificated courses in Peer Mentor training with us. They now volunteer ~~volunteer~~

When evaluated at the start, middle and end of the 8-week programme, participants showed an improvement across an average of 9 out of the 12 categories tested.

There was an average change of +1.6 points on the sliding scale numbered 1-

Understanding of how best to engage and support neurodiverse people and those experiencing high levels of anxiety.

Collaborative relationships with

	<p>In-between these workshops, the IYC project manager kept in regular contact with all the partners, to discuss their actions plans, identify their research progress and provide support and guidance when necessary.</p>
Outcome	<p>The Best Practice Model (BPM) was the main outcome from this Strand, which related to the particular activities they had carried out.</p> <p>The BPM was developed from the learning each of the partner organisations had developed during the project, which was shared during online workshops facilitated by DCT. The BPM is a practical guide aimed at professionals who work with young people (such as youth workers or mentors) on work placements.</p> <p>The BPM is focused on issues that arose for partners during the project and, crucially, discusses how these were overcome. The BPM provides youth organisations with ideas for overcoming challenges they may face when arranging and/or supporting young people on work placements.</p>

Strand 2 Impact Review

Process and Best Practice Model

7.2 The online workshops provided positive opportunities for learning and networking. Partners varied in the length of time they had been operational, and the numbers of young people they worked with. Smaller and newer partners were able to learn from the more established and larger partners.

7.3

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people worked with, was valued by all the strand partners.

“The feedback loop model is beneficial – taking what we know and feeding it into other projects and then embed learning.”

7.6 The outcomes for partners related to their individual projects but also the connections that they made with each other. Young Devon is having ongoing discussions with WKUK *“we’re learning how they do things”* and Seadream CIC made new contacts with SS Freshspring and Battling On through the Strand activities which they may be able to build on in further funding applications.

7.7 One of the partners were able to create capacity in one of their service delivery *the time and space to reflect [on their processes] which was very helpful.”*

7.8 One of the partners commented on the different approach of the Strand and the IYC project more generally. There was time for discussion, shared learning and reflection which they

“What will be next from it all?”

“What is the end game?”

7.18 Partners were keen to keep in contact and collaborate in future projects. They were also keen for the learning from the project to be extended to other organisations and for the BPM to be useful to the wider sector.

Learning and Next Steps Recommendations

7.19 All of the partners expressed that they had experienced some level of confusion about the requirements of the project at the start. Partly this was because they were involved in multiple Strands.

7.20 The lengthening of the delivery and reporting timescale was helpful for all of the partners except one whose employee had a contract endpoint that matched the original Strand timescale. They commented that the delivery felt *‘rushed’*.

7.21 Partners felt that the original timescale has been too tight and even with the extended time, it was difficult to deliver on all of the aims well: *‘the focus was on getting it done in time rather than quality’*.

7.22 Bringing together organisations with a range of delivery experiences worked well for shared learning and for organisations with more experience to assist the development of provision in organisations that were less experienced.

“Learned how organisations solve their problems through the information that was shared.”

7.23 The online workshops worked well as a format for information sharing and were facilitated well. Partners found the workshops helpful. Some partners mentioned they would have liked some in-person workshops and some more time for networking with the Strand.

7.24 Although partners expressed that there had been confusion over exactly what the requirements of the Strand were at the start of the project, they gained momentum with delivery and understanding as time went on.

“The meetings were more productive as time went on. “

7.25 Some of the partners have changed some of their ways of working

7.26 The project prompted a lot of thoughts about ways of doing things differently for partners. On one level, they found this helpful, and the project provided a framework and network for exploring ideas about new ways of working. However, organisations do not always have capacity for introducing new ideas or working in new ways without further funding:

“We now have 10 times more things to do [since the project].”

7.27 Partners would have appreciated clearer and more succinct guidance on what was required for each Strand. This would have helped them to ensure that Strand activities did not overlap more than was necessary. It also would have helped them with the planning of activities. The original delivery timescale put partners under a lot of pressure, particularly as they were not clear on what each strand required. The extension to the delivery and reporting timescale was appreciated but the lack of clarity around if and when the Project would be extended was problematic for staffing and capacity building in the smaller organisations.

7.28 The timescale of the project also meant that key learning from employers and young people who had been involved in the Strand activities was not as comprehensive as some partners would have liked (for evaluation and learning purposes).

“What does good look like? Need feedback from all involved in a project, including employers.”

Outcomes

50 people took up coaching during the project. 42 coachees were female; 8 were male. 12 coachees had additional health or learning needs. There is no outcome recorded for 37 of the coachees. In the majority of cases this is because they disengaged from the coaching programme, in some cases having attended at least one coaching session. Two of them returned to Ukraine and 1

Learning and Next Steps Recommendations

9 Evaluating Strand 4: User Involvement

Strand 4 Summary

9.1 The key

Outcome

Best Practice Model is the key outcome

Learning and Next

“The grant helped us with a review process of everything we do, and also of our procedures.”

11.17 Partners did feel that content was useful, despite having some concerns about its format, so it may be that they will use the elements that are most relevant to their organisation. Further monitoring on this would be helpful in order to measure the longer-term impact of the Project. But we understand that this

11.18 Partners who were involved in multiple Strands benefitted from a higher degree of information sharing and learning processes. This may result in a greater impact from the Project for those partners.

	<p>The BPM development was a process that partners were keen to participate in. The discussions produced the key challenges they faced as organisations when providing support and also highlighted common key barriers for people when trying to move from unemployment to employment. These are outlined and explored in the BPM that has been produced.</p>
<p>Outcome</p>	<p>The BPM is the key outcome from this Strand. The people supported within the organisations and workplaces through the Strand partners and activities also benefited from the Project.</p> <p>Partners recorded their own findings for the Strand activities and drew their own learning from them. This learning was then discussed at the final Strand meeting and fed into the development of the BPM.</p> <p>Organisations often commented on what they would do differently if they were to participate in a similar Strand again. All of the organisations felt that SMEs were often more supportive comparison to large corporations. They felt that barriers for young people with additional needs gaining or keeping employment was sometimes lacking. This was seen as about a lack of understanding of what they needed and what their specific needs were rather than employers not being willing to implement any changes that they needed.</p>

Strand 7 Impact Review

Beneficiary outcomes

12.2 Only one beneficiary was available to be interviewed as part of the evaluation for this Strand because of non-response. However, it was clear that the support they had received had been crucial to their recovery.

12.3 The evidence collected by the partners suggests that the impact on the beneficiaries has been very positive. The interview with a beneficiary supports this finding. Support with confidence-building, as well as practical employment skills, was positive for beneficiaries.

“I surprised myself with how well I could interact. This has helped me cement my career direction.”

Outcomes for Partners

12.4 There was some key learning for the partner that had far less experience in providing in-work support and support into employment. However, all of the partners were very open to learning from each other and this has enhanced the outcomes of the Strand.

12.5 The partners reflected on their practices and in some cases altered them because of the learning and reflection in the meetings. For example, one of the organisations introduced a collaborative learning questionnaire in order to capture outcomes and impact more tangibly from those involved in their Strand activities.

young people needed very practical guidance about payslips, tax, employee rights etc.

12.6 The challenge for all of the partners delivering in this area is lack of funding and lack of capacity to follow 37.68 Tm0 g0 G[fo)-4(r)]TJETQq71.064 34.56 250.73 12.96 reW*-3(a)-3(c)

12.9 The barriers that future beneficiaries of this type of support face are not easily overcome. Often, they are structural and significant investment in support would be required to overcome them, which would then increase the impact of the types of activities that partners discussed and implemented in this Strand. However, the drawing together of the best practice model does highlight what organisations are able to achieve for beneficiaries, despite a very difficult post-pandemic climate with big increases in the cost of living and what many felt is a mental health crisis for younger people.

12.10 Partners learned from each other and were very open to doing so. There was a general feeling that the funding landscape for in-work support for young people was very difficult and that funding is often short-term or non-existent. This is frustrating for organisations because the need is increasing, they are seeing some willingness amongst employers with whom they partner but the possible supportive interventions are limited because of lack of funding.

12.11 Partners felt that more could be provided to help employers meet the needs of young people who were entering work for the first time after education and/or those who had experienced quite a longer period of time not in employment, education or training (NEET). They hoped that the BPM would go some way towards assisting

13 Impact Overview

13.1 This section provides a summary commentary based on the data we have analysed and reviewed through this evaluation on the extent to which the IYC Project has achieved its intended short and medium to longer-term outcomes. These outcomes are set out in *italics*.

Short term outcomes

Individual beneficiaries will be moved closer or into the labour market and will be better equipped to sustain employment through activity that will identify and address barriers, raise aspirations and develop skills.

13.2 There is good evidence that the activity undertaken as a result of the Employability Grants Devon programme and delivered by partners in the other Strands has assisted a significant number of beneficiaries in achieving this outcome.

Young people will be better connected with and able to support their local communities, equipped with valuable skills for future employment.

13.3 There is clear evidence that a cohort of young people have developed skills and have enhanced employability as a result of IYC activities and some limited evidence

Through continual innovation in the use of digital technologies across all Strands of the project, as well as referrals to digital skills provision outside the project, beneficiaries will improve their digital skills and ability to access and participate effectively in a wider range of services and activities.

13.4 There is no evidence that the IYC Project has had a significant impact on

based services which is worthy of further exploration. However, it is likely that some of the support activities and interventions undertaken by partners and grant recipients did indirectly enhance the confidence of beneficiaries in using digital technologies and in seeking help in this area. Some of the activities provided by grants recipients, partners and the coaches in strand 3 were focused on developing digital skills, these include and are non-exhaustive: online searches, navigating information, accessing support services online, developing marketing tools/social media, etc

Communities, especially those in rural and coastal areas, will benefit from increased sustainability, better connection with local services, access to funding for locally led initiatives including regeneration, improving green spaces, working towards net zero, etc.

13.5 There is very limited evidence that the IYC Project has explicitly contributed to this outcome although there is evidence from grant recipients that the Project has assisted them in their development, profile and connections with communities and other organisations. However, one Strand partner (Seadream Education CIC) and three grant recipients (Double Elephant Print Workshop, Bright Sky and Natural Art Movement) produced Decarbonisation Plans, exceeding the target of 1.

Medium to long-term outcomes

Levelling up of disadvantaged communities;

Addressing social and economic inequality for some of the country's most deprived areas.

Improved visibility and understanding of youth services to enable young people and youth workers to access them more effectively.

Achievement of net zero within individual communities.

Access to a better-skilled pool of potential employees for employers, facilitating business growth and improved productivity.

Sustainable rural communities which are well-connected to services and have access to improved spaces.

A swifter and more sustainable recovery from the effects of the pandemic.

13.6 It has not been possible within the scope of this evaluation to measure or provide an informed commentary on the impacts and long

project supported several organisations working with people in

applicants in the same field of activity to collaborate and/or (re) submit a joint application. A longer overall set up phase for IYC would have allowed for say two submission deadlines enabling batches of applications to be considered together with decisions able to reflect a more strategic approach.

14.26 The IYC Project engaged Devon Communities Together to provide targeted marketing and promotional support for the grants programme and some direct support for individual organisations

build in a feedback and consultation phase once the best practice models had been drafted to gain additional input from a much wider range of organisations and individuals. Again, this would have required more time than the overall CRF and IYC timetable allowed but could have enhanced the value and quality of the resources and encouraged a wider sense and awareness of them.

14.31 One of the difficulties of short-term project like IYC is that it can result in staff-turnover and loss of learning. A Project Officer for one of the partners left the organisation part-way through (but at the endpoint according to the original schedule) and although attempts were made to embed project learning it often is person-led.

Beneficiary Engagement

14.32 Young people who were beneficiaries of the activities within the Strands were enabled to participate in giving feedback that will improve delivery of services in the future. Partners commented on the value of this, and it may not have occurred to such an in-depth extent for some of the partners if it had not been for their participation in the IYC Project, particularly those partners who were newer to engaging with young people. This is likely to increase the impact of their services in the

15 Next steps recommendations

15.1 The previous sections of this report identify a range of lessons and learning from the IYC project that should inform the design and development of future projects and activity in the employability field. All of these are relevant to other organisations, including those operating elsewhere in the country, and are not exclusive to Petroc and the partners engaged in IYC.

Researched and written by Clarity CIC for Petroc

www.claritycic.org

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Appendix 2 Breakdown of Target Outputs

Outputs		Total
People	Economically Inactive	83
	Unemployed	58
	Employed	41
	Total	182
Businesses	Small	22
	Medium	6
	Large	0
	Total	28
Organizations	Public	
		28
	Voluntary Sector	41
	Total	82
Types of Support		
Direct Support	1 to 1	72
		110
	Total	182
Financial Support	Grant	35

	Employment increase in supported
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This is a summary of information on the IYC Employability Grants Devon, published on the IYC pages of the Petroc web site.

several grants available for organisations or businesses actively supporting and

