

# Time for flexibility

Covid-19 support for VCSE leaders 28 July 2020



It's a different thought process: 'Are they competent? Are they telling me the truth? Are they able to deliver this?'

In 2018, we published *The possible, not the perfect* with London Funders.





Every day in a community is an emergency. They don't have to have a tragedy or emergency to give money that way.

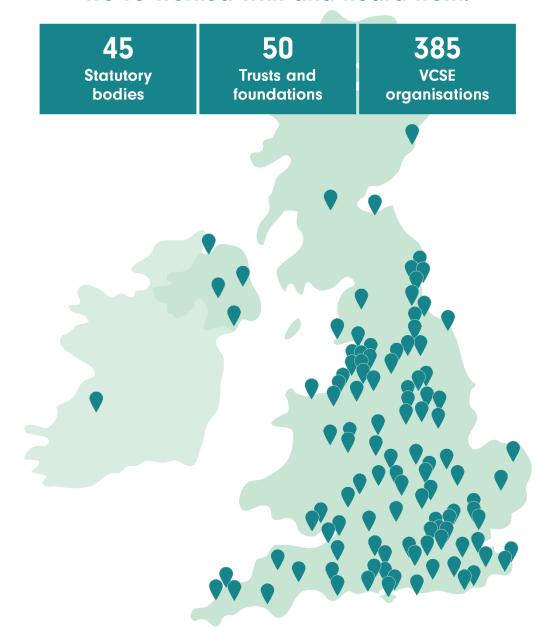


#### What funders did differently

- Commitment to speed
- Managing risk through relationships
- Collaborative delivery and delegated decision-making
- Light-touch application and monitoring
- Flexible funding



### Between March and June 2020, we've worked with and heard from:



#### Sources include...

- Online peer support sessions for VCSE leaders
- Community of Practice for learning leads in trusts/foundations
- Building Health
   Partnerships work
   supporting
   collaboration
   between
   commissioners
   and the voluntary
   sector

#### Six challenges leaders face

- 1. Welfare of workforce
- 2. Welfare of their service users
- 3. Continuity of service delivery
- 4. The organisation's survival
- 5. Funding landscape
- 6. Long-term impact of the crisis



#### Six ways they are adapting

- 1. Actively managing staff and volunteer welfare
- 2. Setting boundaries
- 3. Scenario planning
- 4. Working together
- 5. Listening
- 6. Talking to funders



#### Funders' emergency responses

- Appreciation of the flexibility shown by most (but not all): unrestricted income; reporting; reassurance
- Routine fundraising has ground to a halt; reserves being eaten away; hiatus with new applications
- Reliance on funders to weather crisis and adjust to whatever is needed for the future; worried about changes in funder's long-term priorities



## From emergency into recovery and renewal: sustaining progressive practice

- Support for leaders
- Unrestricted funding and light-touch reporting
- Relationships: trust and risk
- Priorities and plans: clear; grounded; joined up; decisive; letting go of certainty
- Process: straightforward; flexible; sensible
- Expectations: realistic; proportionate
- Engagement with bigger questions, e.g. diversity, equality and inclusion; voice and advocacy
- Thinking about who you haven't heard from



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#### **Learning review**

- To capture and distil the key features and aspects of funder responses to the Covid-19 crisis
- To identify opportunities and practical options for longerterm adaptations and innovations to funding behaviours and processes











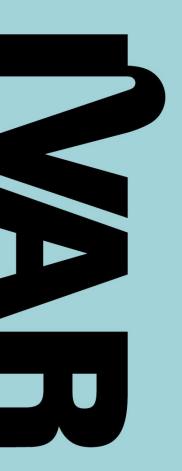
















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