

The Essentia Foundation

Impact Report – 2016 to 2018



Overview

This report aims to provide an overview of the grants that the Essentia Foundation awarded in the years 2016-2018. The organisation's commitment to the health and wellbeing of young people up to the age of 25 has meant it has had the power to create lasting change across Scotland. As the figures show, support across this period of the fund was varied, including both small grants and longer-term support. Following on from this period of funding, The Essentia Foundation's grant making arm lay dormant until 2020, at which point a number of new trustees were appointed. The Essentia Foundation is an active grant maker once again and remain passionate about supporting children and teenagers across Scotland.

This reflective report will examine the geographic distribution of funds, the primary issues that projects tackled as well as project success stories. The following stories are a snapshot of just some of the amazing work achieved to date through these awards.

Facts and Figures

Between 2016 and 2018, the Essentia Foundation achieved the following:

- Funding was distributed to **15 beneficiary organisations**.
- A total of **£281,766.00 in funds** was distributed during this time.
- On average a total grant of **£18,784.40** was awarded to each organisation.
- In total, **4,376 young people** directly benefitted from project activities across Scotland.
- **7 organisations** were awarded multi-year grants of up to 3 years. These organisations are the first seven projects in the table below.
- **8 organisations** were awarded individual grants of up to 1 year.

Funded Projects

Common Wheel	Glasgow City	£30,000.00
Safe Strong and Free Project	Highland	£30,000.00
Cowal Elderly Befrienders	Argyll and Bute	£27,976.00
Safe Space	Fife	£30,000.00
Hillhouse	East Ayrshire	£30,000.00
Pavillion (Greater Easterhouse)	Glasgow City	£27,300.00
Vox Liminis	Glasgow City	£30,000.00
Heart and Sound	Fife	£9,555.00
Appin Community Development Trust	Argyll and Bute	£10,000.00
Hear Me	Angus	£9,976.00
Differabled Scotland	Glasgow City	£10,000.00
Western Isles Foyer	Eilean Siar	£10,000.00
Cue and Review Recording Service	East Dunbartonshire	£10,000.00
Watch Us Grow	North Lanarkshire	£7,390.00
Bazooka Arts	East Renfrewshire	£9,569.00

Geographic Distribution

Between 2016 to 2018, the Essentia Foundation awarded funds to 15 organisations located across 10 local authorities. For a visual breakdown, please see the map below:

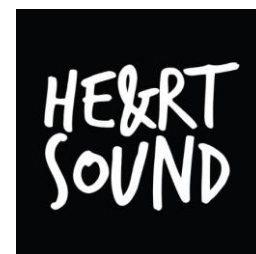


Primary Issues

Applicant organisations are required to select one societal issue that they want their project activities to tackle. If one examines the 15 projects that have been funded over these two years, 8 primary issues have been selected and these are as follows:

Primary Issue	Number of projects
Social inclusion and fairness	1
Health, wellbeing and serious illness	5
Education, learning and training	4
Rural issues	1
Supporting family life	1
Counselling/Advice/Mentoring	1
Poverty and disadvantage	2

Funded Projects



Heart and Sound

Dunfermline

£9,555.00

Heart and Sound was established in 2015 by a group of youth workers in Dunfermline who identified a lack of provision for young people, especially those interested in music in the town. The organisation uses access to music, studio and production equipment to engage young people with youth services and extra-curricular activities. Heart and Sound welcomes participants from across Fife which is a region where young people experience 5% more difficulties, as per the Strengths and Difficulties score, than the national average. When one examines mental health in the region, Fife experiences a higher rate of suicide, self-harm and interpersonal violence than the rest of Scotland (554 Fife v 520 for Scotland).¹

In 2017, Heart and Sound was awarded a grant of £9,555.00 by the Essentia Foundation. Grant monies went towards the creation of a project which was designed to specifically target young people using film, media and visual arts. Project activities centred around the production of 4 short documentary films which examined how young people view mental health and the impact that it can have on family, education, work and relationships. Participants were invited to try out a range of tasks including storyboarding, voice over recording and camera work.

Thanks to grant funding, Heart and Sound managed to deliver 48 sessions involving 40 young people aged between 16-24. The practical nature of activities enabled participants to develop new skills, build confidence and work as a team. The final documentaries helped shed a positive light on young people with mental health issues and how they can live brilliant, successful creative lives and how they cope when encountering struggles. The charity reported a measured change in the following areas through a participant questionnaire:

- Decrease in Social Isolation and loneliness among young people
- Increase in awareness of mental health among young people
- Increase in participation amongst young people not in education or training

Heart and Sound continue to work with vulnerable young people in Fife and provide pathways for training, upskilling and positive mental wellbeing. To find out more about this project and to watch one of the fantastic short films, please click on the following link -

<https://youtu.be/pymySp7fNns>

¹ Fife Mental Health Strategy - [Fife Mental Health Strategy 2020 to 2024.pdf \(fva.org\)](#)

Western Isles Foyer
Stornoway
£10,000.00



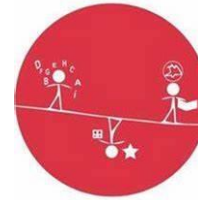
Western Isles Foyer (WIF) was established in 2003 to work with vulnerable young people aged 16-25 years who are homeless, in housing need and/or are experiencing significant social or economic disadvantage. The organisation provides practical help and support offering supported accommodation; advice; training (eg money management, independent living, healthy lifestyles etc) as well as help to access benefits, further education and employment. In addition to providing housing and support to young people who live in the 10 fully furnished accommodation units, the foyer also delivers a range of services for all young people in the local area who can attend drop-in activities and support sessions.

The charity was awarded a grant of £10,000.00 from the Essentia Foundation in 2017. Grant monies went towards the cost of continuing to employ a full-time key worker as well as the annual licence fee for an Outcome Star evaluation monitoring tool. As part of the project, the key worker offered intensive support to young people living in the Foyer's supported accommodation as well as other vulnerable young people in the community. Support included addressing risk-taking behaviour and overcoming barriers to achieving positive destinations in education, training and/or employment. The Outcome Star evidence tool was used to support and measure change for each young person the charity works with, allowing them to demonstrate the value of their work in the local community.

Thanks to grant monies and the secured employment of the key worker, WIF were able to improve staff availability to support drop-in sessions for vulnerable young people. The additional use of the new outcome framework enabled the charity to track their progress in real time and identify gaps in service provision. During the 2017-18 grant period WIF achieved the following key-outcomes:

- Provided accommodation for 14 young people via the supported accommodation service.
- Supported 85 young people with the drop-in service. During the 12 months, this averaged at 54 drop-ins per week.
- Delivered 77 places on a variety of training and awareness raising opportunities for young people.
- Provided independent living skills support to 48 young people in the Western Isles.

Differabled Scotland
Glasgow
£10,000.00



DIFFERabled
Scotland

Glasgow-based DIFFERabled Scotland (DS) was founded in January 2017 and aims to deliver a network of support to groups and individuals with a role in caring/supporting children and young adults with Additional Support Needs (ASN) across Scotland. The charity promotes social inclusion and offers information, advice and training with a focus on neural diversity to all, ranging from early years to adulthood. The majority of their service users support children and young people with Additional Support Needs such as Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia & Dyspraxia and/or a Learning disability, or those not yet with a diagnosis.

The Essentia Foundation awarded the organisation a grant of £10,000.00 in 2017. Funds were distributed to support the cost of setting up & sustaining ten monthly peer-peer support groups in various communities - across Glasgow. These would include Glasgow North-East, North-West & South & also one pilot group in east Dunbartonshire. It was hoped that these new groups would increase the capacity of the organisation and encourage the growth of local support networks across the region.

Differabled commenced project activities in the Autumn of 2017 and the organisation quickly gained a waiting list from interested parents and carers who wanted to engage in the support sessions. Within these sessions the charity was able to identify the lack of support around the management/sensory behaviours of vulnerable children & young people. Differabled were able to consult with parents/carers on appropriate workshops to help with strategies and interventions around these needs. Over the 12-month project duration, the following milestones were achieved:

- 3,410 hours of community activities were implemented during the project.
- 14 people engaged in volunteering activities as a result of the project.
- 154 people participated in community activities for the first time as a result of the project

"We would like to thank you the Essentia Foundation for the opportunity that this grant has afforded us - not only ourselves but all of our parents and carers within the Additional Support Needs community who have gained incredible knowledge, support and positive lives from the creation of so many support groups." – Differabled Scotland

Watch Us Grow

Falkirk

£7,390.00



Watch US Grow was established in 1999 to support people with disabilities and/or mental health issues to realise their potential and raise their aspirations. They achieve this by providing student placements for people with additional support needs who are assisted by volunteers, some of whom are recovering from mental health issues, providing training, employability, respite and healthy activities. From their base in Palacerigg Country Park, Cumbernauld, they support members to gain an SQA-accredited qualification in Rural Skills.



Watch Us Grow was awarded a grant of £7,390.00 by the Essentia Foundation in 2018. Grant monies went towards the costs of staff and volunteers as part of the organisation's 'Baby Steps' initiative. Established in 2016 in Falkirk, 'Baby Steps' is a social enterprise shop which provides paid employment opportunities for local people with disabilities. The shop sells low cost and high-quality children's nursery equipment which also meets the needs of families keen to recycle their much-loved baby equipment.

Thanks to the financial support from the Essentia Foundation, Watch Us Grow was able to employ a development worker who was placed in charge of training young volunteers on their journey into the labour market. During the project, the charity welcomed 2 new volunteers, both of whom were young women with significant barriers to work. The development worker was able to offer a tailored approach to all activities and became an important source of support and friendship during their placements. An additional 9 young people were able to gain new skills as part of the project and the initiative also helped 7 young people come off work-related benefits.

Thanks to the positive local profile of 'Baby Steps', the charity has been able to develop new partnerships with several rotary clubs in the Falkirk area as well as the local council and support services. Moving forward, Watch Us Grow will look towards expanding the number of social enterprise shops in the region as well as continue to empower young people with additional support needs.

"It is very clear that without the investment from Essentia, Baby Steps would not still be in operation. The contribution ensured that there was enough funding to sustain the enterprise for the benefit of our supported staff, families on low incomes and the wider community."
– Watch Us Grow