



Great Giving Funders Award

Name of organisation or individual nominated

Community Development Foundation

1. What have you done to demonstrate a clear understanding of your beneficiaries and the funding environment? (maximum 200 words)?

CDF's starting point is to look at the outcomes the funding is expected to achieve and how to reach targeted beneficiaries. We take a community development approach to funding, from design through to evaluation and have 44 years experience of working with communities. In the last 3 years we have managed over £250 million grants across England, ranging from as little as £500+ to 30,000 Grassroots Grants groups, to £250,000 to 27 larger organisations working to achieve outcomes of the Tackling Race Inequality Fund. In the recession in 2009, we knew that communities - in areas of the country that previously were resilient and self sufficient - were suddenly gripped by rising unemployment. We worked with the Office for Civil Society to swiftly design and deliver the £15 million 'Targeted Support Fund' to get essential funding to front line services supporting increased numbers of unemployed individuals and their families. As part of our research and evaluation work we listen; we use this to provide further support and help sponsors plan future investment. For example, at the end of the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund, we wrote 'Setting up for Success' to help groups with their development and sustainability.

2. How were you able to demonstrate your application and understanding of your grant making to give clear guidance and support? (maximum 200 words)

In 2009 we were delighted that DSC members rated CDF in the top two of more than 200 government funders based on five indicators: availability, contacts, clarity, relevance and applications. In 2010 the National Audit Office commended CDF as an exemplar of good practice for the way in which we work with civil society organisations: 'We found the Foundation was particularly strong in providing support to delivery partners and managing delivery to ensure outcomes are achieved.' We know that potential beneficiaries may need help with their applications and ongoing support if they are successful. We build into our proposals website, email and telephone support. Beneficiaries tell us that this is invaluable. All documentation produced and grant reporting requirements are clear and proportionate to the size of grants. This helps potential groups to apply only for those grants for which they are eligible. 39% of Grassroots Grants beneficiaries had

never applied for funding of any kind, demonstrating the accessibility. Through transparent criteria we ensure disappointment and complaints are managed. The Faiths in Action programme was managed on a rolling basis with the offer of telephone support so groups could have more time to prepare their applications, increasing their chances of success.

3. What was your response to your applicants' needs or changes in the wider environment? (maximum 200 words)

By listening to applicants over the various programmes – successful and unsuccessful – and sponsors we continue to learn how to improve our services to meet changing needs and priorities. For example, in the Grassroots Grants programme, we listened to those who told us that the maximum eligibility income level of £20,000 per annum was too low, especially for those living in London Boroughs. We liaised with OCS and re-negotiated the level to £30,000. In the Active at 60 Programme (retired), we recognised that, due to its innovative nature it may take applicants longer to fully understand the aims of the programme. We worked closely with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and partners in local communities to ensure that applicants were given the best possible advice via telephone support and face to face sessions. This helped potential applicants to be successful in their funding requests and to shape the most effective projects for funding. The Targeted Support Fund had tight timescales and CDF mitigated against the risk of underspend by working on an individual basis with each of its funded partners. We re-negotiated and constantly monitored progress, agreeing solutions according to needs, for the benefit of the communities concerned.

Additional Nomination Comments from others