



## Investing in Social Change Award

### Name of organisation or individual nominated

Impetus Trust

#### 1. What need were you trying to meet? (maximum 200 words)

How did you hear about the problem, and identify the particular need?

**Breaking the cycle of poverty by creating opportunities for the most disadvantaged people in the UK to gain employment, education and skills.**

There are over 13 million people living in poverty in the UK, which is nearly a quarter of the population, and a higher proportion than in most other European countries. This number includes many children, who have missed out on the economic growth of recent decades. Worryingly, levels of child poverty have actually begun to rise again in the past few years.

In addition, social mobility in this country is lower than it is in most other developed countries, and little progress has been made to improve this. This means that the odds are stacked against people from disadvantaged backgrounds being able to break the cycle of poverty, and make better lives for themselves.

There are many larger innovative charities in the UK that are working hard to tackle this problem, but still much more is needed. Ambitious smaller charities could play a much bigger part, but they often lack the resources and investment they need to be able to scale-up and help many more disadvantaged people.

#### 2. Why was the need so important? (maximum 200 words)

Explain what it was that made you take action, why did you care so much?

Government can only do so much to combat this problem. There is an urgent need to build the capacity of the voluntary sector, so many more disadvantaged people can be equipped with the skills they need to improve their lives.

We were determined to do just this. We saw that many charities were achieving fantastic results and were ambitious to grow, but they faced two major problems: it was extremely difficult to find core funding, as most funding was restricted to backing isolated projects; and they lacked the management support and expertise needed to successfully and sustainably scale-up.

This meant that charities were being stifled: they had the knowledge and proven methods of achieving long-term results for the poorest people, but they lacked the support they needed to help them really raise their game, and reach significantly more people.

We saw that by investing in high-potential charities, and helping them grow

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dramatically, we could achieve the greatest long-term social impact.

### 3. How did you meet the need? (maximum 200 words)

Explain what you actually did - resources used, people worked with etc.

We saw that by investing our time and skills in high potential charities – as well as our money – we could have a much greater impact than just giving money alone. Happily, others agreed. So far, more than 150 talented professionals and 12 forward-thinking companies have joined us in volunteering their skills to help transform small and medium-sized charities fighting poverty.

Our support package to charities consists of:

- Funding so the charity can increase its capacity.
- Management support from an experienced Impetus staff member - an 'Investment Director'. The charity and Investment Director meet regularly, and the Investment Director provides his/her expertise to help the charity reach its goals.
- Specialist expertise on particular projects. Our network of highly-skilled experts volunteer their skills to the charity in key areas, such as business planning and financial reporting. This enables the charity to benefit from expertise that is tailored to their needs, which they would not otherwise be able to afford. To date, the value of the expertise given to Impetus charities is over £4 million.

As of August 2009, we have invested in 13 charities, and we aim to invest in up to four new charities each year.

### 4. What change did you achieve? (maximum 200 words)

What happened as a result of your work, and what impact has this had?

As a result of our support package, charities we work with dramatically increase the number of people they help: on average, a charity supported by Impetus helps a staggering 56% more people each year.

This growth is much greater than the charity would have achieved without Impetus support. For example, Leap Confronting Conflict, which builds the skills of young people to prevent violence, was growing at an average of 3% a year before it partnered with us. Since we began working with them, *Leap* has grown at an average rate of 32% a year.

This growth is carefully planned, as we work with charities to help them develop clear strategic plans and sustainable income. This means that more people like Joe, who was homeless, can be given the skills they need to turn their lives around and contribute to society.

Charities supported by Impetus are now helping over 200,000 economically disadvantaged people a year gain access to education, employment and skills. As these charities tackle the root causes of poverty, they deliver long-term results. The social impact of this is huge as it enables people to become more independent and to escape their own (and possibly their family's) poverty trap.

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