



Youth Health & Development Fund

A REPORT FROM YEAR 1

FIND OUT MORE

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ASB Community Trust
Te Kaitiaki Putea o Tamaki o Tai Tokerau

supported by ASB

THE PROGRAMMES

Te Awaroa Youth Charitable Trust Youth Vision project

A Helensville-based youth development project that will cover employment skills training, life skills training, social development, health and wellbeing sessions and outdoor adventure activities.

Home and Family Counselling programmes

Creating Respectful Relationships — a psycho-educational group for young women aged 10-17 years, and Anger Without Aggro — a psycho-educational group for young men and women aged 10 -17 years.

Refugees as Survivors RYAN project

Wrap-around support for young refugees and their families provided through a range of services and programmes, which will include mentoring and peer support. Youth will be engaged to identify their health and social needs. A strong partnership with other services and agencies is central to this approach.

Silverfern Motorsport Charitable Trust

A West Auckland based Trust that is providing a new training and mentorship programme, targeting at-risk rangatahi aged 15-18 years who live in Waitakere City.

The programme offers youth with a variety of hands-on experiences working in the

automotive and motorsport sector alongside specialists, providing them with basic industry-based skills, self-empowerment and pathways to employment and other training. The programme has been developed utilising a collaborative approach industry with the motorsport community, local government and local marae.

South Kaipara Men's Trust Kai Taka Waenga programme

A Helensville-based project aimed at young men in the community that will provide mentoring in collaboration with local iwi, NZ Police, Helensville Youth Aid and Kaipara College. A whanau liaison person has a critical role to support young people through links between parents, community and the school.

YWCA Auckland Future Leaders Programme

A four-year programme that provides mentoring, skills development and practical assistance to young women who show leadership potential in Year 10.

Youthline Auckland Youth Health Councils

The Youth Health Councils project focuses on health promotion and youth development with the intent to improve the health status of young people. This will be done by developing and implementing School Health Councils in the Auckland Secondary Schools and wider community settings.

this, it's brave. This is a brave thing to do to put a significant amount of money into (the) slightly unknown — albeit based on good information and advice. All sectors need champions, that's how change happens, and innovation happens.”

The seven providers are now looking forward to entering the implementation stage of their projects.

Says Shelley Anderson, Manager of Home and Family Counselling: “Because of this group and this project, I'm (now) always looking at how can I take (what we do) wider and wider. And (thinking), ‘How can I empower young people to take ownership and leadership of the issues that they are interested in, and are experts of?’

“It's got me back to being passionate about working with youth, which I'd lost a bit of passion for ... Being able to set up a programme that I can be really proud of ... and having someone else excited about what (I'm) doing. Somebody else saying, ‘Yes, that sounds excellent — we're going to give you our stamp.’”

As another grantee put it: “Non-governmental organisations often struggle with the requirements and restrictions of funding streams. The ASB (Community) Trust has embraced an innovative funding

model which reinstalls faith in our hearts and minds.

“When someone believes in you and your project, it's phenomenal what can occur after that ... That's what all the projects are going to be about, whether they're about cars or life skills or health or fitness or whatever, it all comes down to us helping those young people to have belief in themselves; that they are capable, they are worthy and they can do it. That to me is what it's all about.”

Capacity Development New Zealand (CDNZ) is a not for profit organisation which aims to support community organisations to become confident, resilient and sustainable. CDNZ and the ASBCT are working in partnership with the youth sector providers to develop and implement this innovative high engagement model.

www.cdnz.org



peer support. You're getting future planning, business planning ... you're getting a whole range of things that actually, if you were going to go and do one of those courses ... yeah, okay you'd go and sit in there for three days it would cost you 1200 bucks."

Some providers say it's support they wouldn't be able to afford normally. For others, attending so many workshops has had serious implications on their project budgets, although they're quick to point out that the Trust has been supportive about providing additional funds to address this.

Says Andrew Connelly, Director of the Men and Family Centre, South Kaipara: "If I had any advice for future applicants it would be to include all the costs that they can see being involved in their project, including administration and management."

Another grantee believes it's a fund that will suit some providers more than others: "It's a really good way of getting your house in order and really knowing what you're about. (But I wouldn't recommend) leaping (at it just) because it looks like a big lump of money. You've really got to know it fits within your strategy and your annual plans and your long-term business plan. And to be really aware of

the commitment it takes ... It's a lot of work, but it's a lot of reward too for the organisation."

PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUTH

After reviewing the refined business proposals in October, the ASB Community Trust Board agreed all seven projects should be accepted for funding. The Trust marked the occasion with a celebration, which all the providers and trustees were invited to.

One provider lists that event as a memorable highlight: "That was quite special really because you could actually then feel their level of involvement and interest in this fund and us as groups."

Adds another: "What was great is that they shared the same passion as we had!"

"It all comes down to us helping those young people to have belief in themselves."

Alison Taylor of CDNZ confirms that the participation of the Trust management and Trustees has been an important part of the high-engagement funding model: "I think one of the things that's been really important for this is having some champions, and all credit to Jenny (Gill) and the Trustees who have championed

INTRODUCTION

In 2010 the ASB Community Trust launched an innovative new fund aimed at improving health and social outcomes for young people (12-24 years) in the Auckland and Northland region.

The "Youth Health and Development Fund" marked a significant shift in the Trust's approach to grant-making: it adopted a high-engagement high-trust model; aimed to support just a few organisations but to fund them well with provision for multi-year funding; and uniquely for the Trust at the time, also dedicated a portion of funds to capacity building and evaluation planning.

This document records the experiences and learnings of those involved in the first year of the fund and is shared in the hope that it may inform and inspire others driven by the desire to make a difference in their communities.

BACKGROUND

The Youth Health and Development fund grew from the recognition that, in the words of ASB Community Trust CEO Jennifer Gill, “a different kind of philanthropy is needed if we are to find answers to the deeply entrenched social problems in New Zealand.”

Trust Chair Ann Hartley was attending a conference of community trusts in Napier when a judge gave a moving talk about some of the young people who appeared in his court for sentencing. He ended it with a plea for help: “What do I do with these kids? What do I do?”

Determined to help answer this question and improve outcomes for youth in Auckland and Northland, the Trust commissioned a report into the health and wellbeing needs of young people in the region.

It isn't just about the project or the programme, this is about, 'What does the organisation need in order to be able to deliver that project?'

The research reviewed existing youth health and development policies, models of best practice and services, and

highlighted gaps and opportunities for the Trust.

Following consultation with key stakeholders in the sector, the Trust defined a funding policy based on five key principles:

- More ongoing engagement with applicants and the youth sector
- Fund fewer projects that are more strategic and innovative in approach
- Multi-year costs will be considered
- The Trust may be the sole funder of projects
- Additional support for capacity building and evaluation planning will be provided.

In May 2010, proposals from seven youth health and development providers were selected and recommended to the Trustees for consideration in part one of a two-stage application process.

After receiving initial approval, representatives from each of these providers then entered stage two — a period of focused group and one-on-one workshops which used best practice models, tools and templates to assist the organisations to refine and strengthen their business cases.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

All the providers emphasise that the Trust's willingness to consider multi-year funding has made a huge difference to their programmes.

“Three years is actually a long time for us,” says Stephen Bell of Youthline Auckland. “Most of our funding contracts are year by year and you can have 10, 12, 14 staff employed and it can change like that,” he says, snapping his fingers for effect.

Hilary Sumpter of the YWCA, says it alleviates the pressure and uncertainty of short-term grants, allowing her team to focus more resource on delivery.

“I mean the process of the high engagement model has had its learnings, but the thing is it's also funding to succeed from the funder's perspective ... And that's what I've just loved about this process.”

Part of the aim of the fund's approach is to help ensure the providers have a sound exit strategy and are well positioned to apply for government and other funding by the time their funding term finishes with the Trust.

CHALLENGES

While feedback on the Youth Health and Development fund has generally

been positive to date, all parties report that they've been challenged by the time commitment required.

In the period from July to October 2010, there were a series of four group workshops based at the Trust's premises as well as a one-on-one sessions with CDNZ.

Alison Taylor of CDNZ is sympathetic: “I don't think anybody had realised what the demands of being involved in a high-engagement model were going to be and that continues to be a challenge for some.”

The Trust has addressed this for the next fund cohort in 2011, creating clear guidelines on the two-stage process and hosting information sessions for potential applicants.

One provider comments that she wasn't aware of the time commitment required: “I probably wasn't even thinking about (the time commitment when I applied). I was expecting money to do my project. I would have glanced over what was expected and thought, ‘That sounds cool’ but not realised the intensity of it. But I'm grateful for that. I don't necessarily think they should change that.

“Actually what you're getting out of this is free training, free professional development and support. You're getting

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

For ASB Community Trust Grants Advisor Shalini Pillai, the cooperation and collaboration she's observed between the providers has been one of the most rewarding aspects of the fund to date: "coming together; reducing the fragmentation in the sector and the peer learning and support that each group has given each other has been the most satisfying thing. It is amazing to me how people are willing to share stuff — job descriptions, policy templates, things like that."

Dr Arif Saeid of RASNZ says it has been one of the highlights of his organisation's involvement, and has provided specific and immediate assistance towards its goal of providing wrap-around support for young refugees, with Youthline and YWCA both offering assistance.

For new provider Silverfern Motorsport Charitable Trust the opportunity to build relationships with more experienced organisations has been invaluable. Says Silverfern co-founder Marie Person: "For groups like us who weren't connected to the youth sector to start with, this process allowed us to be able to get in to that circle. Otherwise, it would have been quite difficult and it would have taken longer. And now we have a relationship with six other groups who we can email and talk to."

Hilary Sumpter, CEO of the YWCA, agrees there are benefits to having a diverse mix of experience in the groups: "We all get so mired in our own work, we're not put together as providers or deliverers unless it's enforced by somebody else and then it generally has to be a funder because they're the ones that we all jump for.

"(But it's important that) we can actually share and raise the standard. Because we owe it to the people that we work for and work with — our stakeholders and people on our programmes — to be as good as we can be. So if we can share knowledge and experiences it's just a huge opportunity."

"Now we have a relationship with six other groups who we can email and talk to."

Stephen Bell, CEO of Youthline Auckland, concurs: "I think that a combination of groups that are just starting and groups that are established is quite a good mix. It's a bit like running a youth group: it's quite good to have people who are hanging on to the edge as well as ones who are doing quite well and some (who) build the linkages that carry the whole lot."

The Trust engaged Capacity Development New Zealand (CDNZ) to help shape and deliver this project development and evaluation support.

Alison Taylor, CEO of CDNZ explains the rationale for investing in capacity building up front: "All organisations need to build strong infrastructure and capability and the challenge for NGOs (non-governmental organisations) is that nobody ever really wants to pay for that. Nobody, until fairly recently, has been interested in funding the capacity of those organisations to actually evolve and develop.

"One of the nice things about this fund is that it isn't just about the project or the programme, this is about, 'What does the organisation need in order to be able to deliver that project or programme effectively?'"

LESSONS LEARNED

RELATIONSHIPS KEY

An early and important focus in the fund's first year was the establishment of strong relationships: between the Trust and key delivery partner CDNZ; between both those parties and the providers; and between the providers themselves.

Alison Taylor of CDNZ recalls that relationship building was the first major goal: "It was really critical to the Trust and CDNZ that we focus initially on building relationships. We had to build confidence between ourselves, which meant high trust, and then very quickly we had to build that confidence with the providers ... So then they could just focus on 'Hey actually I've always wanted to talk to you,' or 'We could do some work together.'"

CDNZ reviewed each provider's original submission and then worked with them to understand their project scope and capacity to deliver, in order to help them strengthen their business and evaluation plans.

This support was immediately welcomed by most of the providers. Says one: "To me it's about looking deeper into your project; learning more but being given support in those other areas that you may not have thought of, or you may not have realised the importance of."

For some of the grantees, it was their first opportunity to consider fundamental governance issues like organisational structure, systems, policy, financial sustainability and succession planning. It led to a dramatic decision for at least one provider:

“That’s the thing that I didn’t realise at the beginning, the Trust’s not only interested in the project they’re funding, but they’re actually interested in our organisation as a whole and how we function and the other projects we’ve got going ... So they’re looking at developing the health and capacity of the whole organisation, not just making sure that this project that they’ve funded is a success.

“That is a very different approach from a funding point of view. Most funders will fund a project or a salary or something, and then they require accountability for that, but they don’t look at the big picture. Whereas ASB (Community Trust) with this high-engagement model is looking at the big picture and that’s been great.”

FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY

If the establishment of relationships was crucial for the sort of discussions required to give the programmes the best chance of success, flexibility to adapt the original business plans was also important.

Trust Grants Advisor Shalini Pillai maintained close contact with the providers — regularly attending some workshops with CDNZ so she could understand their needs and have first-hand insight into any challenges they might be facing.

For the providers, this flexibility to alter their plans beyond the original submission without jeopardising their funding has been one of the fund’s strong points, as it allows for continual development and learning.

Says a provider: “Mostly when you apply for a fund, the funders are not involved in the way the ASB (Community Trust has been), so you see them like a higher level ... But the way they are doing it this time is totally different: they are there with us ... to help us develop the project, and if there is anything that needs to be changed or modified, because they are going through the process as well ... they will be open, because they can see (what’s needed) for themselves.”

Another grantee endorses that perspective: “One of the best things has been being able to have open discussions with the Trust about how it’s working for us ... so they can learn as funders how to work better and that’s been brilliant because there aren’t many funders who would be open to that.”

Heidi Van Duyn, Manager of Te Awaroa Youth Club, observes that this reflects the spirit of the providers’ own practice: “It was really refreshing to come across a funding model that reflects true youth work. In the youth work code of ethics

there are amazing clauses about being honest and straight up and transparent and all of that stuff, and it’s really nice ... for it to come not just in your own walk with youth, but with the funders that are also walking alongside you.”

“They can learn as funders how to work better and that’s been brilliant.”

Confirms Shalini Pillai: “(Everyone’s) been very willing to listen, willing to learn. It has made such a difference and it is so important in terms of trust building. Everything’s quite transparent.

“I think this is where you can really be responsive to the needs of community, by being flexible, and it’s through experiencing this year that I’ve been able to see how beneficial that has been.”

LEARNING AND EVALUATION

Another key area of focus for the fund in the first year was evaluation planning and for this the Trust and CDNZ took a developmental approach, focusing on learning and long term outcomes.

The providers were required to outline their evaluation plans and outcomes for success as part of the more comprehensive

business plans they developed in stage two of the application process.

Capacity New Zealand introduced best practice concepts, including theories of change and logic modelling, to assist with their thinking, and that proved challenging for some providers.

Dr Arif Saeid, Community Services Manager of Refugees as Survivors New Zealand (RASNZ) says this was a major area of new insight for his project and the delivery team will now be inviting the young refugees they’re supporting, and their parents, to provide feedback to assist evaluations. They also intend adding youth representatives to their steering committee and Board, which has the additional benefit of providing new skills and work experience for these young people.

Another provider represents the views of several when she says: “The learning was at so many different levels ... there’s the learning I got as far as (how to write up) funding applications, taking the seed (of an idea) and (developing it into an actual) programme; how to manage my time differently ... How to measure outcomes; what to consider when you’re measuring outcomes; different, more creative ways of evaluating ...”