

Attendees in discussion at the SHARED Enterprise 'Building Business Partnerships' workshop Elizabeth Elmore

The Heritage Lottery Fund has invested more than £4.6million in an innovative capacity building programme designed to help UK heritage organisations build future financial resilience. Today, the first evaluation report has been published.

As far back as 2010, HLF recognised that the UK's rapidly changing economic landscape posed significant challenges to UK heritage organisations.

Working in partnership with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Arts Council England we devised Catalyst, a package of measures to increase private giving, fundraising capacity and ultimately financial resilience in the UK cultural sector.

Today we are publishing the first evaluation report which focusses on the two capacity building programmes: Catalyst: Umbrella and Catalyst: small grants. Since grants were awarded in 2013, Catalyst: Umbrella projects have offered a variety of opportunities for heritage organisations across the UK including workshops covering all aspects of fundraising, 1:1 support sessions for tailored advice, webinars, conferences, mentoring schemes and online resources.

Catalyst: Small grants, also awarded during 2013, have supported individual organisations to undertake a wide range of activities including developing a fundraising strategy, training staff and volunteers and building relationships.

The Catalyst: capacity building programme's first evaluation report provides us with an overview of how the Umbrella projects are working and reflects on the impact of Small grants so far.

Key findings include

- The nine Catalyst: Umbrella projects are expected to deliver over 15,000 learning opportunities through a variety of approaches
- Increasing people's confidence towards fundraising in general is key and is recognised as a core area to develop across all of the Umbrella projects
- The results of a survey of Catalyst: Small grant recipients shows evidence of an emerging culture shift in the approach of heritage organisations to fundraising
- 92% of organisations who did not have a fundraising strategy before receiving a Small grant have now developed one

Gemma Thorpe, Catalyst Programme Manager, said: "It's great to see such positive findings from the first evaluation report and that organisations are already reporting achievements having received a Catalyst: Small grant. However, we recognise that fundraising remains a challenge and I'd encourage people to have a look at the low cost training and networking opportunities on offer through the Umbrella projects and get involved."

Our evaluators, DC Research, have shared some of the headline findings from the evaluation report about Small grants on the HLF Catalyst online community. Plus we are also sharing reflections from two of the Catalyst Umbrella projects; The Prince's Regeneration Trust's BRICK and SHARED Enterprise, delivered by SHARE Museums East.

Do come and share your thoughts on what more can be done to support greater success around fundraising for the heritage sector in the online community.



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Catalyst: Capacity building programme evaluation