

Heritage Lottery Fund

Grantee and Applicant Customer Care Surveys



Name: Jon Young
Job Title: Associate Director
Tel: 0207 400 1010
jon.young@bdrc-continental.com

providing intelligence

File location/File Name/Author Initials/Support Initials/Date

Contents

Page No.

Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
1.1 Applicants.....	3
1.2 Grantees.....	4
2. Introduction and Methodology	5
2.1 Introduction.....	5
2.2 Research objectives	5
2.3 Methodology	6
2.4 The data presentation	6
2.5 Tracking results	6
3. Applicant Customer Care Survey	8
3.1 Applicant response breakdowns	8
4. Satisfaction overall	12
4.1 Overall handling of the application process	12
4.2 Recommendation	13
4.3 Importance of HLF funding	14
4.4 Further HLF grant applications	15
5. The pre-application process	16
5.1 Researching the HLF	16
5.2 Contact with HLF at the pre-application stage	17
5.3 Pre-application contact with HLF staff	17
5.4 Ratings of specific elements of the application process	18
5.5 The importance of HLF help	19
6. The application process	20
6.1 Online applications.....	20
6.2 Improving the online process	21
6.3 The paper application form	22
6.4 The HLF website	22
6.5 Guidance notes.....	22
6.6 The application form.....	24
6.7 Producing applications	25
7. Assessment	26
7.1 Contact with HLF	26

7.2	Rejected applicant feedback.....	26
8.	Project development.....	27
8.1	HLF staff support	27
8.2	Second round applicants - process summary	28
	Grantee Customer Care Survey	30
1.	Overall satisfaction	33
1.1	Overall rating	33
2.	The project lifecycle	34
2.1	Permission to start	34
2.2	Contact with Grants Officer.....	34
2.3	Monitoring forms	35
2.4	Payment drawdown.....	36
2.5	External Monitors	36
2.6	HLF Mentors.....	36
3.	Project costs and completion dates.....	37
3.1	Project costs	37
3.2	Completion dates	39
4.	HLF Support	40
4.1	HLF support.....	40
4.2	Other HLF-funded projects	41
5.	Appendix	42
5.1	Guide to statistical reliability	42

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Applicants

- Ratings of HLF's overall handling of the application process have marginally increased, applicants providing a mean score of 7.99 out of 10, compared to 7.97 in 2011. The increase is driven by higher ratings amongst both 'approved' and 'rejected' applicants.
- Strong ratings are complemented by a high propensity to recommend the HLF to other organisations, 93% saying they would be likely to do so compared to 90% in 2011. Again, this is driven by improved scores amongst successful and unsuccessful applicants.
- HLF grants remain essential to projects' viability, over half (56%) stating that their project would not have gone ahead without HLF funding, and a third that it wouldn't have gone ahead had HLF required greater partnership funding. Both of these figures have increased significantly since the 2011 survey, underlining increasing importance and reliance on HLF funds.
- BDRC Continental's research amongst other grant providers underlines the importance of staff and support in providing a positive application experience. Importantly, HLF have received positive ratings, 93% of single and first round applicants describing them as 'helpful'. Similarly, the vast majority of second round applicants (92%) agreed that staff were very helpful, an increase on figures reported in 2011. Around a fifth of applicants (22%) stated it is unlikely they would have submitted an application without HLF help.
- The methods by which applicants research and submit their applications have shifted in recent years, with online methods assuming greater prominence. 88% went on the HLF website to source information (compared to 78% in 2011) and 98% submitted their application online.
- The increasing use of the HLF website at the pre-application stage has coincided with a decline in contact with HLF by other means of communication.
- BDRC Continental's research elsewhere highlights that as online usage increases and people become more 'IT savvy' expectations of IT facilities also increase. Perhaps in line with this ratings of the online application process have declined since 2011. Is there need of a refresh in this area?
- The vast majority of single and first round applicants recall consulting guidance notes when preparing their applications; 3 in 5 recalling the exact notes they consulted (an improvement on the 2 in 5 in 2011).
- Over a quarter of single and first round applicants (27%) and over a third of second round applicants (37%) agreed that applying for HLF funding imposed unnecessary burdens upon their organisation. BDRC Continental's qualitative research amongst grant providers elsewhere demonstrates that the burden of grant applications can be

overcome if expectations are managed at an early stage. Can more be done by HLF at the outset?

1.2 Grantees

- Grantee ratings of the overall service provided by HLF have also increased compared to 2011, an average score of 8.88 out of 10 compared to 8.62 in 2011.
- As with applicants, good support from HLF is a strong driver of overall ratings. Over 9 in 10 grantees stated that they contacted their Grants Officer while their project was being implemented and the vast majority of these found them helpful.
- Almost all measures of HLF support have increased since 2011. 87% of grantees agreed that the HLF provide effective support to promote deliver of their project to time and cost (79% in 2011); 92% that the Grant Officer showed good knowledge and understanding of their project (84% in 2011) and 80% that the HLF-appointed monitor showed good understanding of their project (72% in 2011).
- In line with applicants, there has been a significant migration to online methods compared to 2011. Over 4 in 5 submitted their monitoring forms online, a significant increase on the 50% who did so last year. Ratings of monitoring forms have increased since 2011 – is this linked to online submissions?
- A fifth of projects (20%) report that their project costs increased once they received their grant and just under half (49%) that the completion of their project was extended or delayed. Importantly, both of these percentages have declined since last year (25% and 68% respectively).
- It is becoming more important that project costs are not exceeded by grantees. Of those who did encounter an increase in project cost, there has been a decline in the proportion who had at least some of the excess met by HLF (13% v 20% in 2011). Similarly, there has been a drop in the proportion that were able to secure funding from a separate grant organisation (22% compared to 32% in 2011).
- BDRC Continental's research for other grant-providers highlights the importance grantees attach to communicating with similar projects when developing their project. The communication is viewed as a platform for sharing best practice and idea generation. Almost a third of grantees (29%) had spoken to other people involved in an HLF-funded project similar to their own. Around 1 in 10 of all grantees had done so due to a suggestion by HLF. Can more be done to increase this contact amongst projects?

2. Introduction and Methodology

2.1 Introduction

In 2012, BDRC Continental was commissioned to carry out a bi-annual survey of HLF applicants and grantees. The work is a continuation of previous rounds of research conducted by IPSOS Mori from 2008-2011. In line with IPSOS Mori's work, the survey was conducted anonymously using a telephone approach.

This report summarises the findings from the first two waves of research in November 2012 and June 2013.

2.2 Research objectives

Broadly speaking the **applicants** questionnaire seeks to explore the following areas of respondents' experience in applying for a HLF grant:

- dealings with HLF staff
- the application process (successful applicants) – methods of applying; ratings; suggested improvements
- the applications process (rejected applicants) – ratings of the application rejection process
- the development phase – HLF appointed mentors; HLF grants staff
- the assessment period
- overall ratings and propensity to recommend

The **grantees** questionnaire seeks to look at the following elements of respondents' experience:

- relationships with grant officers
- ease of using monitoring forms
- external monitors
- mentors
- costs

2.3 Methodology

BDRC Continental conducted two waves of telephone surveys with HLF grantees and applicants in November 2012 and June 2013. Each wave involved interviews with grant applicants who have received a decision about an application and grant recipients whose funded projects were completed within the last year. The first wave of grantee and applicant interviews took place between January and February 2013; the second between November and December 2011; and the third between May and June 2013.

All interviews were conducted in BDRC Continental's in-house call centre using CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing). Respondents were contacted a maximum of three times with a target of 70% completed interviews amongst the overall sample. In total 1308 interviews were conducted with applicants and 417 with grantees.

2.4 The data presentation

The key findings are illustrated by charts and tables throughout this report. Commentary is provided on overall results and any statistically significant differences between sub-groups are reported on.

All figures are quoted in the charts as percentages and the base size from which the percentage is derived is indicated at the foot of the charts. All figures are 'unweighted'.

Please be aware that the percentage figures for the various sub-samples or groups need to differ by a certain number of percentage points for the difference to be statistically significant. This number will depend on the size of the sub-group sample and the percentage finding. The statistical reliability of our findings is outlined in the appendix in this report.

2.5 Tracking results

Although representative of the overall applicants and grantees populations, the profile of both groups fluctuates over time, and this can have an impact on overall results. This is most noticeable amongst applicants who are made up of a combination of 'approved' and 'rejected' respondents. 'Rejected' applicants are generally more likely than 'approved' applicants to give 'negative' results and this can therefore have an influence on the overall findings. In this year's survey the proportion of 'approved' applicants that took part in the survey is lower than in 2011 (61% versus 66%). Therefore, we would expect to see increased negativity in the ratings of the process. Similarly, ratings that are higher than, or on a par with 2011, should be viewed in a more positive light.

Both applicants and grantees questionnaires changed substantially in 2009 and although some key measures remained the same (and trend data has been presented where possible), the sequence of the questions has changed, creating a potential order effect. These types of changes can have an impact on the way respondents frame their responses and so, strictly speaking, it is not advisable to make direct comparisons between the last four waves of research and research carried out before 2009.

3. Applicant Customer Care Survey

3.1 Applicant response breakdowns

The following tables compare the profile of the applicants who were interviewed against the profile of the total sample population. The profile of applicants interviewed generally matches the total population. The sample is divided into subgroups, based on a number of classifications which are detailed below.

Clarification on the definitions of Group 1, 2 and 3:

Group 1 – Single stage applications

Group 2 – 2 round applications that have been awarded a round 1

Group 3 – 2 round applications that have been awarded a round 2

Grant programme

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
Heritage Grants – Group 1	41	3%	64	3%
Heritage Grants – Group 2	209	16%	377	16%
Heritage Grants – Group 3	95	7%	180	8%
Your Heritage	762	58%	1403	59%
Parks for People – Group 1	-	-	-	-
Parks for People – Group 2	17	1%	32	1%
Parks for People – Group 3	8	1%	18	1%
RPOW – Group 1	-	-	-	-
RPOW – Group 2	12	1%	22	1%
RPOW – Group 3	11	1%	17	1%
Landscape Partnerships – Group 1	-	-	-	-
Landscape Partnerships – Group 2	15	1%	23	1%
Landscape Partnerships – Group 3	3	<1%	4	<1%
Young Roots	122	9%	225	9%
Townscape Heritage Initiative – Group 2	11	1%	21	1%
Townscape Heritage Initiative – Group 3	2	<1%	3	<1%
TOTAL	1308		2389	

Organisation type/1

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
Church organisation or other faith-based group	29	2%	52	2%
Community / voluntary group	698	53%	1317	55%
Local authority	98	7%	144	6%
Other public sector body	483	37%	876	37%
TOTAL	1308		2389	

Organisation type/2

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
Committee	258	20%	454	19%
Delegated	894	68%	1644	69%
Trustee	70	5%	130	5%
Board	86	7%	161	7%
TOTAL	1308		2389	

Region

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
East Midlands	115	9%	188	8%
East of England	107	8%	209	9%
London	157	12%	321	13%
North East	78	6%	166	7%
North West	130	10%	220	9%
Northern Ireland	41	3%	85	4%
Scotland	134	10%	230	10%
South East	156	12%	278	12%
South West	129	10%	225	9%
Wales	76	6%	118	5%
West Midlands	100	8%	185	8%
Yorkshire and The Humber	85	6%	150	6%
TOTAL	1308		2389	

Grant size

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
£50,000 or less	426	33%	713	30%
£50,001 - £999,999	299	23%	524	22%
£1,000,000 - £4,999,999	61	5%	75	3%
£5 million or more	5	<1%	8	<1%
Unsuccessful	517	40%	1029	43%
TOTAL	1308		2389	

Heritage Area

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
Historic buildings and monuments	264	20%	482	20%
Industrial maritime and transport	73	6%	125	5%
Intangible heritage	526	40%	956	40%
Land and biodiversity	198	15%	360	15%
Museums, libraries, archives and collections	240	18%	448	19%
Community Heritage	7	1%	18	1%
TOTAL	1308		2389	

Decision

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
Approved	792	61%	1362	57%
Rejected	516	39%	1027	43%
TOTAL	1308		2389	

4. Satisfaction overall

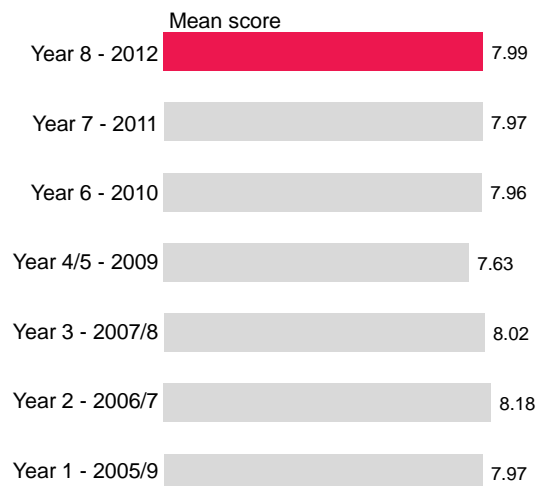
4.1 Overall handling of the application process

Towards the end of the survey, applicants were asked to rate HLF's handling of the application overall.

- Applicants remain positive about the HLF's handling of their application. On a scale of 1-10 (1 being very poor and 10 being very good), applicants gave HLF a mean score of 7.99. This is a slight uplift on the 2011 figure, and is a positive finding given the higher proportion of rejected projects surveyed this year.
- Given that approved applicants tend to award higher overall ratings than those who were rejected, we have also weighted this year's data to the proportion of approved and rejected applicants interviews in 2007/8. This acts as a sense-check to ensure that any increases and decreases in ratings are an accurate reflection of the application process, and *not* driven by the make-up of the sample. Positively, the overall 'weighted' mean score is 8.48, compared to a weighted score of 8.15 in 2011.

Overall handling of the application process: mean scores

Taking everything into consideration, on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is 'very poor' and 10 is 'very good', how would you rate the HLF's handling of your application?



Base: All applicants: Year 1 – 2005/6 (643), Year 2 – 2006/7 (631), Year 3 – 2007/8 (601), Year 4/5 – 2009 (544), Year 6 – 2010 (450), Year 7 – 2011 (675), Year 8 – 2012 (1308)



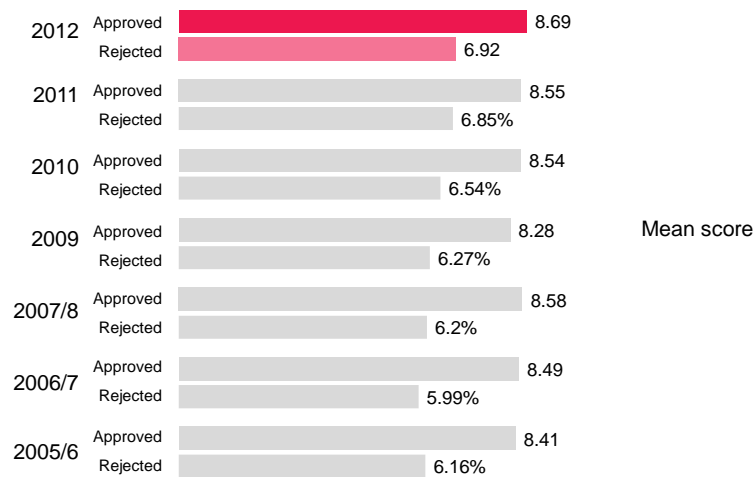
2

J:\Current_Jobs\TTL\11888 - HLF Applicants Research\Reporting\HLF Summary Report Charts

- As stated above, 'approved' applicants tend to provide more positive ratings than 'rejected' applicants. The chart below underlines this difference; 'approved' applicants in 2012 providing a mean rating of 8.69 for the overall handling of the application process compared to 6.92 amongst 'rejected' applicants.
- Positively, 'approved' and 'rejected' applicants report higher overall ratings than in previous years.

Overall handling of the application process: mean scores approved applicants

Taking everything into consideration, on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is 'very poor' and 10 is 'very good', how would you rate the HLF's handling of your application?



Base: All applicants: Year 1 – 2005/6 (643), Year 2 – 2006/7 (631), Year 3 – 2007/8 (601), Year 4/5 – 2009 (544), Year 6 – 2010 (450), Year 7 – 2011 (675), Year 8 – 2012 (1308)



3

4.2 Recommendation

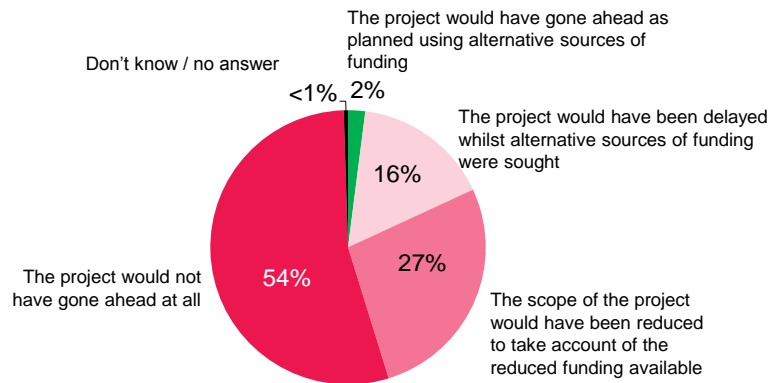
- Good opinions of the overall handling of the application process translates into strong advocacy of the HLF, 93% stating they would be very/fairly likely to recommend the HLF to another organisation compared to 90% in 2011.
- Almost all successful applicants (99%) and the majority of unsuccessful applicants (83%) stated they would be likely to recommend the HLF to another organisation. Both groups show higher advocacy levels than 2011 (97% and 76% respectively) providing further evidence that the overall experience has improved for both types of groups.

4.3 Importance of HLF funding

- HLF funding remains essential to project viability and for the vast majority of applicants, the project would not have gone ahead as planned had HLF funding not been available. For:
 - 54% the project would not have gone ahead at all
 - 27% the scope of the project would have been reduced
 - 16% the project would have been delayed whilst alternative sources of funding were sought.
- The proportion who stated their project would not have gone ahead at all without HLF funding has increased significantly since 2011; 54% from 44%. Is this a reflection of the tightening of government budgets amongst cultural and heritage venues?

Need for HLF funding - no funding

If no HLF funding had been available, which one of the following statements do you think would best apply to your project?



Base: All single and second round decision applicants whose applications were approved (650)

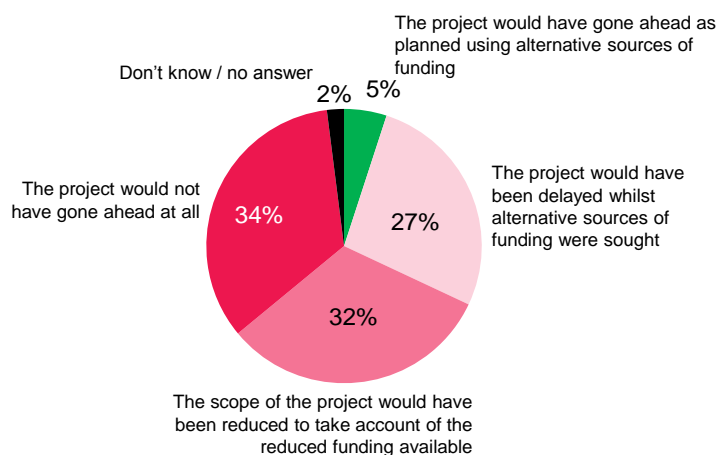


J:\Current Jobs\TTL\111689 - HLF Applicant Research\Reporting\HLF Summary Report Charts

- The vast majority of single and second round applicants stated that their project would have been hindered had HLF required greater partnership funding.
- Again, the proportion stating the project would not have gone ahead at all has increased significantly since last year (34% compared to 20% in 2011).

Need for HLF funding - greater partnership funding

And if HLF had required greater partnership funding, which one of the following statements do you think would best apply to your project?



Base: All single and second round decision applicants whose applications were approved (650)

4.4 Further HLF grant applications

- The HLF grant application process leaves a positive legacy beyond recommendations to other organisations, 93% of applicants stating they would consider applying again to the HLF for a grant.
- Importantly, 87% of 'rejected' applicants stated they would consider applying again, suggesting that the majority were not put off by the process.

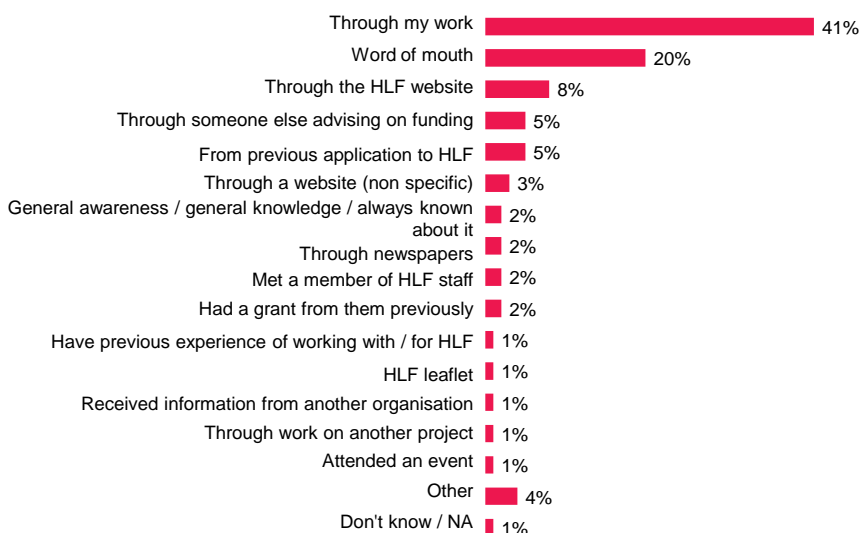
5. The pre-application process

5.1 Researching the HLF

Single and first-round decision applicants were asked a series of questions about the pre-application process.

- Around 2 in 5 of all applicants (41%) first learned about the HLF through the work their organisation carries out. This is comparable to the 42% reported in 2011.
- The benefits of strong advocacy of the HLF (and therefore a positive experience) is underlined by the 20% of applicants who cited they heard about the HLF through word of mouth, an increase on the 12% who cited this in 2011.
- More applicants are being driven to the HLF website, 8% having done so, compared to 5% reported in 2011

How did you first learn about the HLF?



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants (1189)

  5
J:\Current Jobs\ITTL\11689 - HLF Applicant Research\Reporting\HLF Summary Report Charts

- The HLF website has also assumed increased importance as a source of information about HLF grant schemes; 88% having consulted for this reason, compared to 78% in 2011. Other reasons make up only a small proportion of responses, the next most likely source of information being 'word of mouth' (8%).

5.2 Contact with HLF at the pre-application stage

- The majority of applicants have some sort of communication with the HLF at the pre-application stage, although this has declined across the majority of communication channels since last year.
- 78% received any response to their pre-application. This is a 13 percentage point decline on 2011 findings, although remains higher than the 75% reported in 2010.
- Does the decline in contact with the HLF across all communication channels coincide with the increase in use of the HLF website at the pre-application stage? Or are HLF resources stretched, given the increase in applicants compared to previous years. Importantly, overall ratings have *not* declined, but the fluctuations are worth monitoring for future waves.

Did you have contact with the HLF in any of the following ways before making your application?



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants (1189)

5.3 Pre-application contact with HLF staff

BDRC Continental's work for other heritage grant providers demonstrates the importance of staff in providing a positive application experience. Often, a process may be difficult to complete but the strong support of staff generally leads to positive ratings and strong advocacy.

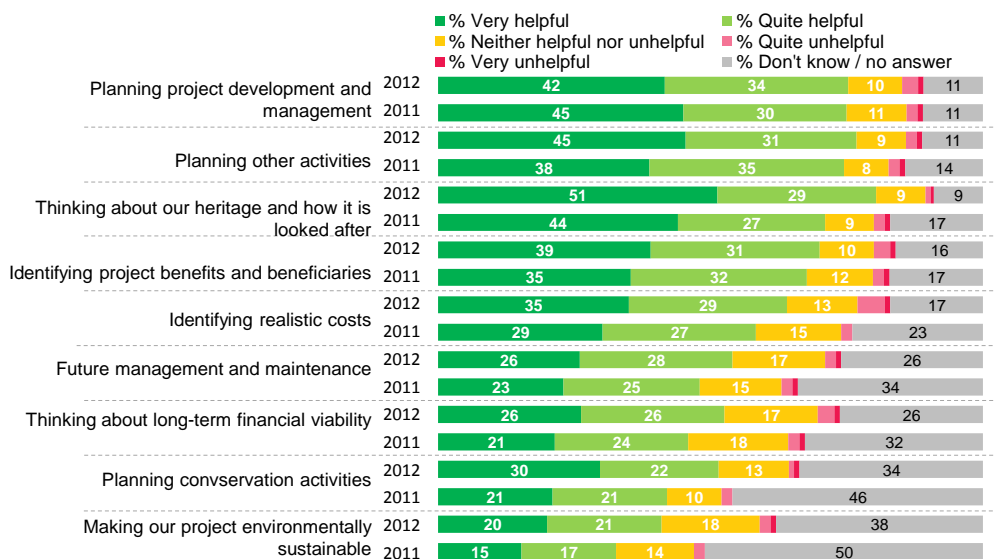
- Importantly, of those who *did* speak to HLF staff during the pre-application period, 93% rated them very/fairly helpful; 71% describing them as 'very helpful'. This is a similar proportion to 2011 when 94% gave a helpful rating, although is perhaps more positive given the higher proportion of rejected applicants surveyed this year.
- 99% of accepted applicants and 86% of rejected applicants rated staff as helpful.

5.4 Ratings of specific elements of the application process

Applicants were asked to rate specific elements of the application process. The chart below illustrates their responses to each of them. A number of elements have a high proportion of ‘don’t know’ responses which can either mean low awareness of this element or that the measure is not relevant to their project. Therefore, increased ratings may be a reflection of HLF staff successfully raising awareness as opposed to improving their customer service in this area.

- Applicants were generally positive about each of the specific elements and rated the HLF higher than 2011 in a number of areas.
- There are notable increases in ratings of HLF for ‘thinking about our heritage and how it is looked after’ (80% stating staff were helpful v 71% in 2011); ‘planning other activities’ (76% v 73%); ‘planning conservation activities’ (52% v 42%) and ‘making our project environmentally sustainable’ (41% v 32%).
- There were also positive jumps on financial measures compared to 2011, applicants more likely to rate staff as being helpful in ‘identifying realistic costs’ (64% v 56% in 2011) and in ‘thinking about long-term financial viability’ (52% v 45%).

Rating help on specific aspects of the application



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants who had contact with HLF staff (1153)
Percentages of less than 4% not shown on the chart for clarity

5.5 The importance of HLF help

Applicants were also asked how likely it was that they would have submitted an application without the contact of HLF staff.

- Just under a quarter of applicants (22%) stated that it is unlikely that they would have submitted an application for funding without HLF help. Despite the growing percentage of applicants using the HLF website at the pre-application stage, staff contact is clearly still an important element of the application process for a notable proportion of applicants. This reliance has not declined in line with the increase in website use.
- 84% of applicants agreed that the advice they received helped them to produce an improved application; 96% amongst approved applicants, 70% amongst rejected applicants.
- 19% of rejected applicants disagreed that the advice helped them to produce an improved application.

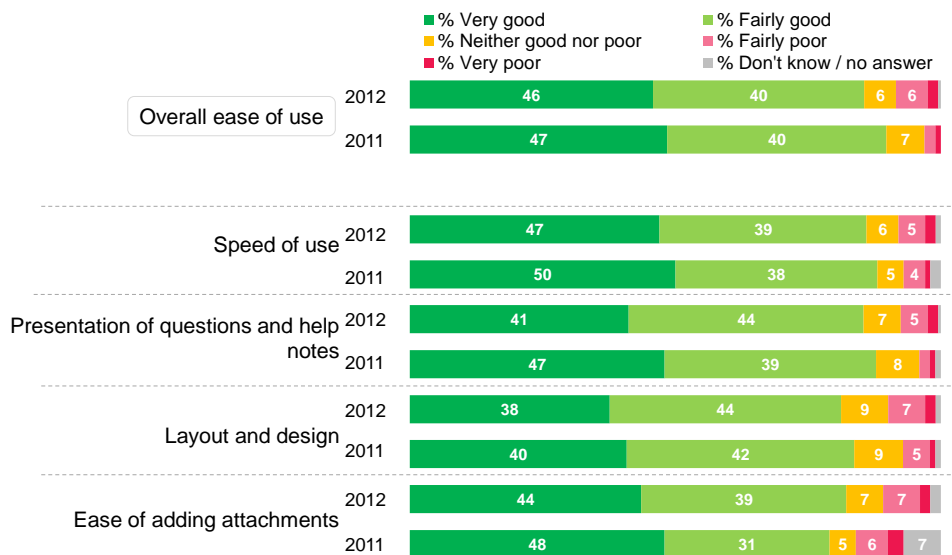
6. The application process

6.1 Online applications

Almost all applicants now submit their application online (98%) with just a fraction submitting hard copies.

- The vast majority of applicants (86%) who submitted an application online rate the process's overall ease of use as 'very/fairly good'. Findings are comparable to 2011 (87%).
- Positivity of the online application system has generally remained consistent with 2011 ratings, although there has been some negative movement in the proportion of applicants who rated elements of the process as 'very good'. There have been drops in the 'presentation of questions and help notes' (41% rating it as very good compared to 47% in 2011); 'speed of use' (47% v 50%); 'layout and design' (38% v 40%); and 'ease of adding attachments' (44% v 48%).
- Other work conducted by BDRC Continental highlights that as online systems improve and people become more IT-savvy, the expectations of IT facilities also increase. Is this slight decline in positivity a result of higher expectations amongst applicants?

Rating the online application system



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants who submitted an online application (1162)
Percentages of less than 4% not shown on the chart for clarity



9

6.2 Improving the online process

Applicants who use the online application system are invited to suggest ways that it could be improved in future.

- Almost half (48%) of those asked stated that they cannot think of any improvements to be made. The suggestions submitted by the remaining two thirds of the sample are detailed in the table below. Although 'better online guidance notes' were most likely to have been stated, a large number of suggestions can be grouped into improving the design and ease of using the process.

What, if anything, would have improved the online application for you?	%
Better online guidance notes	6%
Making it shorter / faster	6%
Better / easier to read	5%
Make it easier to send attachments / improve facility for attachments	4%
Make it clearer / do not always understand what questions want	4%
Allow me to edit answers / copy and paste text etc.	4%
Better formatting / allow me to format the text	4%
Allow me to make changes to answers / cannot change anything once it is entered	4%
Make it easier to use / more user friendly	4%
Saving the application before submitting it	3%
Improve the finance / budget section / make it shorter / have better categories	3%
To be able to see more of what I enter / can only read 1-2 lines of text at a time	3%
More space to write answers / make the boxes bigger	3%
Mention of other technical problems e.g. website crashing, timing out	3%
Have better design / better layout	2%
Include other features / tools e.g. word-count, spell check	2%
Ability to contact an adviser e.g. Online chat facility / by telephone	2%
Other criticism of questions e.g. repetitive / not relevant to us	2%
General mention – more flexibility	2%
Make online application compatible with Word / Excel / Mac etc.	1%
Make it easier to print copies	1%
Would prefer to fill in offline e.g. As a Word document / on paper	1%
Allow more than one person to work on an application	1%
Other	4%
Can't think of anything / nothing would have improved it	48%

Base: All single and first round applicants who submitted an online application (575)

6.3 The paper application form

Only 20 applicants submitted a hard copy of their application, but those who did provided positive feedback.

- 16 of these applicants rated the layout and design as 'very good' or 'good' (just 2 describe it as poor).
- 17 applicants rated the overall ease of understanding as good (again, only 2 rate it as poor).

6.4 The HLF website

- The majority of single and first round applicants are happy with the ease of navigation on the HLF website - 86% say they found it easy to find the information they needed to make their application, compared with 87% in 2011.
- A small minority (7%) said they found it difficult.

6.5 Guidance notes

- In line with previous years, the vast majority of applicants (94% v 95% in 2011) recall consulting HLF guidance notes when preparing their applications.
- 3 in 5 of these recall the exact notes they consulted, a significant improvement on the 2 in 5 who could recall the specific notes in 2011.
- The most common purpose for consulting the guidance notes was to look at the help notes for filing in their application form; 19% stating this compared to 11% in 2011. The chart overleaf outlines all reasons given.

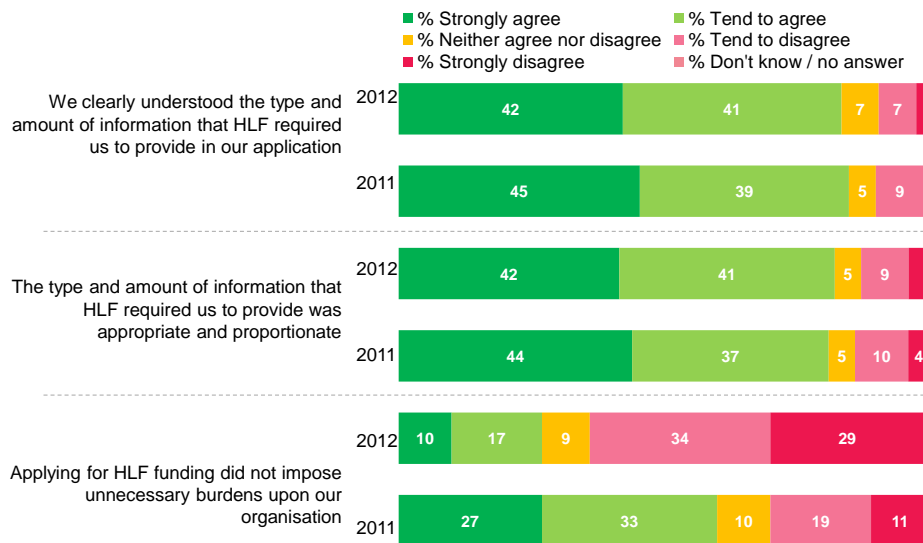
Guidance notes	All applicants who can recall using guidance notes %
The help notes for filling in the application form	19%
Evaluating your HLF project	9%
First steps in participation	8%
The introduction note for the programme you were applying to	7%
Planning activities in heritage projects	7%
First steps in learning	6%
Conservation management planning	6%
Financial appraisal for heritage projects	7%
Thinking about volunteering	4%
Management and maintenance planning	4%
First steps in conservation	4%
Planning greener heritage projects	4%
Thinking about learning	3%
Thinking about community participation	3%
Understanding full cost recovery	3%
Thinking about conservation	2%
First steps in evaluation	2%
Thinking about arts and heritage	2%
First steps in working with young people	2%
Thinking about interpretation	2%
Thinking about oral history	2%
Thinking about audience development	2%
Thinking about archives, people and communities	2%
Thinking about training	2%
Sustainable timber procurement	1%
Thinking about buying heritage items and collections	1%
Improving your project for disabled people	<1%
Thinking about archaeology	<1%
Thinking about language heritage	<1%
Thinking about buying land and buildings	<1%
Including the Welsh language in your projects	<1%
Don't know / no answer	40%

6.6 The application form

Applicants were asked to rate the type and amount of information HLF asked them to provide in their application.

- Around 4 in 5 (83%) agreed that they clearly understood the information required, and the same proportion that the information required was appropriate and proportionate.
- However, it is also worth noting that over a quarter of applicants (27%) agreed that applying for the funding imposed unnecessary burdens upon the organisation. Although the question wording was changed this year, the data echoes findings from previous years.
- Qualitative work conducted by BDRC Continental amongst applicants for other grant distributors highlights that the application process is often perceived to be difficult. A common challenge is the strain the process puts on organisations' internal administrative procedures, which are often not developed enough to meet the needs of the rigorous application procedure. Although the majority of organisations appreciate the necessity of these procedures, a common complaint is that they were not made aware of the strain the application process would put on their organisations at the pre-application stage. Can more be done by HLF to manage applicants' expectations?

Rating the application form



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants (1189)
Percentages of less than 4% not shown on the chart for clarity

6.7 Producing applications

- For the majority of applicants, more than one person was involved in preparing the application. Similar to 2011, for just over two-thirds (69%) of applicants, 3 or more people were involved in the process overall.
- 32% of applicants sought help from an outside organisation to prepare their application.
- These figures do not differ between accepted and rejected applicants.

7. Assessment

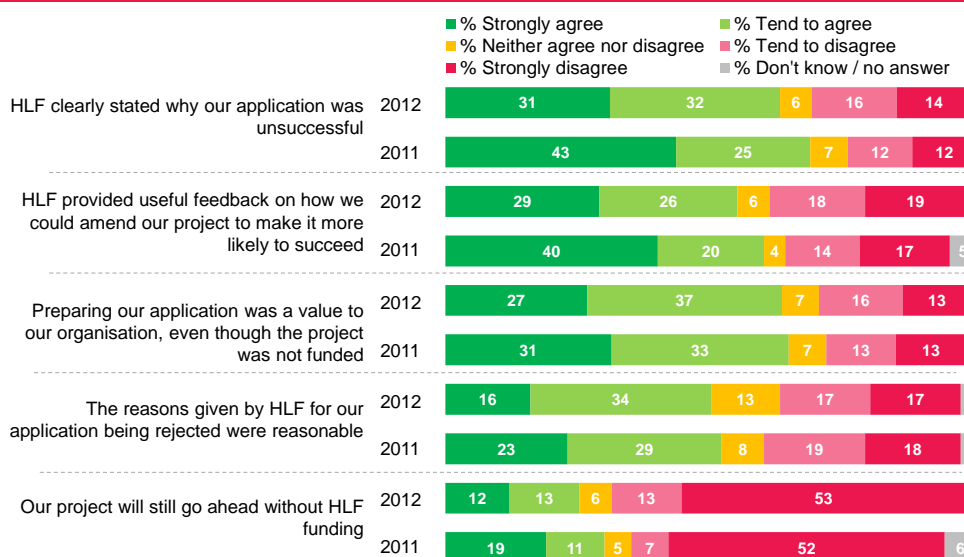
7.1 Contact with HLF

- Similar to 2011, almost three in five (59%) single and first round applicants were contacted by their Grants Officer while their application was being considered. This is significantly lower amongst 'rejected' applications (51% v 64% of 'accepted' applications).

7.2 Rejected applicant feedback

- Amongst 'rejected' applicants, negativity towards the procedure is slightly higher than in 2011. Just under two thirds of rejected applicants (63%) agreed that HLF stated why their application was unsuccessful compared to just over two thirds in 2011 (68%). The proportion of those stating they 'strongly agree' has declined most notably (31% from 43%).
- Similarly, a lower proportion of rejected applicants strongly agree that HLF provide useful feedback on ways of amending their project for future applications (29% v 40% in 2011).
- There remains some positivity over the application process – 64% stating the application was still of value to their organisation and for some (25%) their project is still likely to go ahead without HLF funding.

Rejected applicant feedback



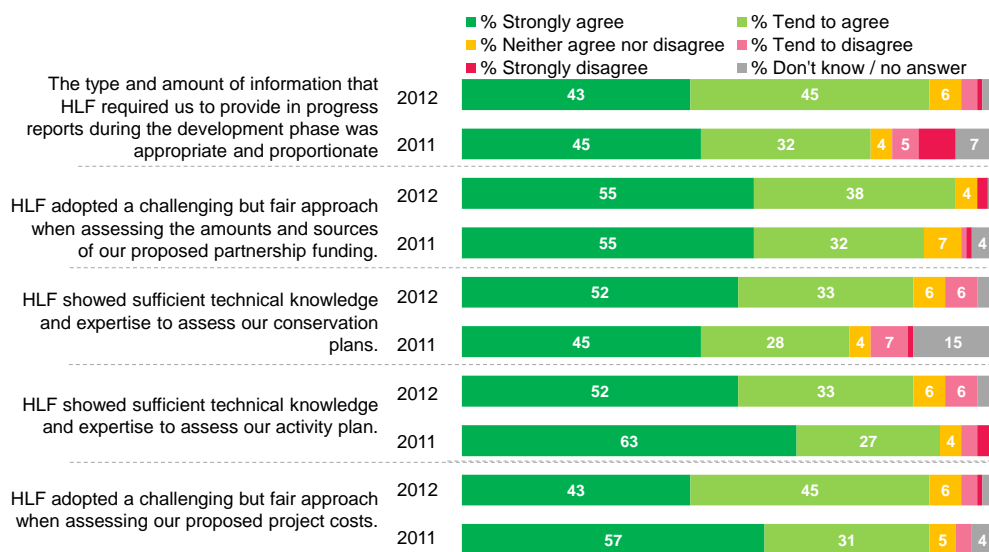
Base: All single-round and first-round rejected applicants (512)
Percentages of less than 4% not shown on the chart for clarity

8. Project development

8.1 HLF staff support

- Around two thirds of second round applicants (63%) had an HLF – appointed mentor for the development phase of their project.
- Of those who did, the vast majority (92%) stated that they were helpful – 75% very helpful. This is a 10 percentage point rise on 2011, although due to small base sizes, this difference is not significant.
- Second round applicants were generally positive about how HLF handled the application process. There is some fluctuation in comparison to 2011, but due to the small base sizes, the majority are not significant.
- Notably, the proportion who stated they ‘strongly agree’ that HLF adopted a challenging but fair approach when assessing proposed project costs is 14 percentage points lower than in 2011.

Second round decision applicant feedback



Base: All second round decision applicants (119*)
Percentages of less than 4% not shown on this chart for clarity

8.2 Second round applicants - process summary

- The vast majority of second round applicants (95%) submitted their application for the project online. Those who did were generally positive about the experience although ratings are lower than amongst first and second round applications. 74% of second round applicants rated the presentation of questions and help notes as 'good' compared to 85% of second round applicants; 78% rated the overall ease of use as good (v 86%); and 73% the layout and design as good (v 82%).
- Suggestions for improving the online application for second round applications include:
 - 'Allowing me to make changes to format/text' (11%)
 - 'Improvements to the finance/budget section' (8%)
 - 'Make it easier to send attachments' (7%)
 - 'Mention of other technical problems' (7%)
 - 'More space to write answers/make the boxes bigger' (6%)
 - 'Make it easier to use/more user-friendly' (6%)
 - 'Make it clearer/not always sure what the questions want' (5%)
 - 'Better online guidance notes' (5%)
- A lower proportion of second round applicants found the HLF website easy to use; 75% compared to 86% of single or first round applications. This finding mirrors a slight increase in negativity towards the online systems amongst single and first round applicants.
- 90% recall looking at guidance notes when they were preparing their application, of whom 72% recollect the specific guidance notes they read or used – a higher proportion than amongst single and first round applicants. These include:
 - 'Planning activities in heritage projects' (26%)
 - 'The help notes for filling in the application form' (25%)
 - 'Conservation management planning' (21%)
 - 'Management and maintenance planning' (15%)
 - 'Evaluating your HLF project' (13%)
- Ratings of the application writing process were generally positive:
 - 87% agreed they clearly understood the type and amount of information required
 - 83% agreed that type of information was appropriate and proportionateHowever, over a third (37%) agreed that applying for HLF funding imposed unnecessary burdens on their organisation. This is higher than the 27% of single and first round applicants who stated this.

- Nearly all second round applicants (95%) were contacted by a HLF grants officer and the majority (89%) found them helpful.
- 85% of applicants dealt with one or two grant officers over the course of the assessment – a similar proportion to 2011, 88% having done so then.

Grantee Customer Care Survey

Grantee response breakdowns

As with the applicants survey, the grantee sample is designed to ensure that the profile closely matches that of the total grantee population.

The following tables break down the subgroups within the sample to demonstrate how the two profiles compare.

Grant programme

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
Heritage Grants	40	10%	86	12%
Your Heritage	306	73%	489	70%
Parks for People	1	<1%	2	<1%
RPOW	5	1%	6	1%
Pre-SP2			2	<1%
Townscape Heritage Initiative	1	<1%	3	<1%
Young Roots	64	15%	115	16%
Total	417		701	

Organisation type

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
Church organisation or other faith-based group	24	6%	27	4%
Community / voluntary group	264	63%	448	64%
Local authority	43	10%	84	12%
Other public sector body	86	8%	141	9%
Total	417		701	

Decision maker

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
Committee	38	9%	79	11%
Delegated	370	89%	604	86%
Trustee	9	2%	18	3%
Total	417		701	

Region

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
East Midlands	31	7%	55	8%
East of England	28	7%	44	6%
London	45	11%	85	12%
North East	19	5%	37	5%
North West	36	9%	69	10%
Northern Ireland	23	6%	32	5%
Scotland	39	9%	61	9%
South East	62	15%	100	14%
South West	45	11%	78	11%
Wales	27	6%	41	6%
West Midlands	34	8%	56	8%
Yorkshire and Humber	28	7%	43	6%
Total	417		701	

Grant size awarded

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
£50,000 or less	374	90	606	86%
£50,001 - £999,999	41	10	82	12%
£1,000,000 - £4,999,999	1	<1	8	1%
£5 million or more	-	-	5	1%
Total	417		701	

Heritage area

	Responses		Sample	
	Number of responses	Proportion of total	Number in sample	Proportion of total
Historic buildings and monuments	69	17%	107	15%
Industrial maritime and transport	13	3%	20	3%
Intangible heritage	213	51%	368	52%
Land and biodiversity	50	12%	81	12%
Museums, libraries, archives and collections	72	17%	125	18%
Total	417		701	

1. Overall satisfaction

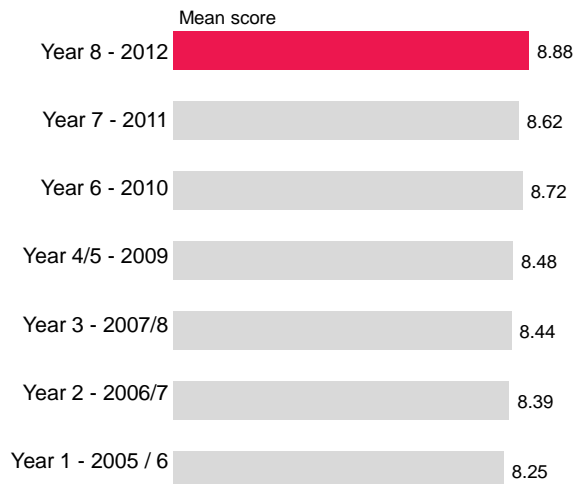
1.1 Overall rating

Grantee feedback on the service provided by the HLF during the implementation of the project is an essential element of the grant-awarding process

- Overall, ratings are strong and with an average score of 8.88 out of 10, 2012 satisfaction is higher than previous years (8.62 in 2011).

Overall rating of grant officer / monitor – Mean Scores

Taking everything into consideration, how would you rate the service provided by the HLF during the implementation of your project?



Base: All grantees, Year 1 – 2005/6 (643), Year 2 2006/7 (529), Year 3 – 2007/8 (600), Year 4/5 – 2009 (599), Year 6 – 2010 (566), Year 7 – 2011 (541) Year 8 – 2012 (417)



J:\Current Jobs\ITL\11689 - HLF Applicant Research\Reporting\HLF Summary Report Charts

- Due to small base sizes, it is not possible to analyse all grant programme types. However, we are able to look at Your Heritage (306), Young Roots (64) and, indicatively, Heritage Grants (40). There is little difference in ratings amongst Your Heritage (8.89) and Young Roots (8.94) although Heritage Grants rate the service lower (8.60).

2. The project lifecycle

2.1 Permission to start

- The vast majority of grantees (95%) stated that they received the go-ahead to start their project within the timescale they expected. Only 3% felt that their projects were delayed.

2.2 Contact with Grants Officer

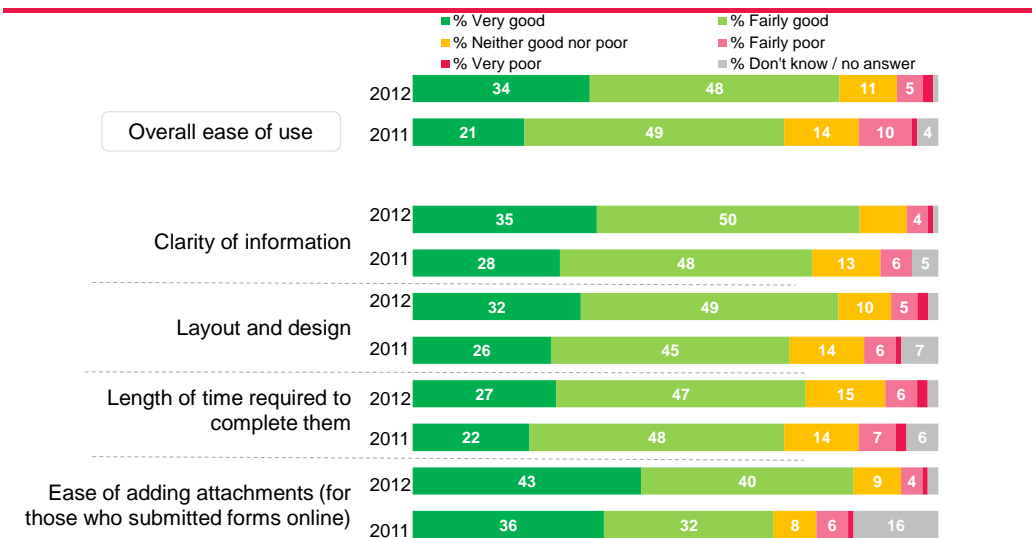
- Nine in ten (92%) grantees say that they contacted their Grants Officer while their project was being implemented and, of those that did, almost all feel that this contact was helpful (98%). 89% say that it was *very* helpful. Just 2% felt that the contact that they had with their Grants Officer was unhelpful (in line with last year), which equates to just 6 individual respondents out of the total sample of 417.
- 56% of grantees retained the same Grants Officer throughout the course of their project; 24% experienced one change and 18% more than one change. Importantly, changing Grant Officer does not appear to have a negative impact on overall satisfaction.
- BDRC Continental's work with other grant-awarding organisations demonstrates the importance of a positive working relationship with grant officers and other members of staff. Although processes can often be challenging, when sufficient support is provided, overall satisfaction is generally high.

2.3 Monitoring forms

- Over 4 in 5 (82%) grantees submitted their monitoring form online, a significant increase on last year when 50% did so. Around a third (31%) returned hard copies of their forms – roughly half the amount that did so in 2011 (63%).
- Grantees are generally positive about the monitoring forms and there has been an increase in ratings since last year. Very/fairly good scores were given by:
 - 85% for clarity of information compared to 76% in 2011
 - 83% for ease of adding attachments (70% in 2011)
 - 82% for overall ease of use (71% in 2011)
 - 82% for the layout and design (71% in 2011)

Are these jumps linked to the increase in online submissions? Or have the monitoring forms become more user friendly this year?

Rating the monitoring forms



Base: All grantees (417 in 2012, 541 in 2011, 556 in 2010, 599 in 2009) except for the statement 'ease of adding attachments'. Asked of those who submitted forms online (341 in 2012, 269 in 2011, 224 in 2010, 174 in 2009)

Percentages of less than 4% not shown on the chart for clarity



J:\Current Jobs\TTL\11689 - HLF Applicant Research\Reporting\HLF Summary Report Charts 16

- Consistent with previous years, around 8 in 10 grantees (83%) agreed that the type and amount of information asked for in the monitoring documents was appropriate and proportionate.

2.4 Payment drawdown

It is HLF's policy to make all grant payments within 15 working days of receiving all relevant supporting information.

- Overall, 95% of grantees stated that the HLF was effective in making payments within this specified time; a rise on previous years. That said, 15% stated that the HLF were only *fairly* effective, suggesting that there is still some area for improvement.

Grant drawdown effectiveness



Base: All grantees (417 in 2012, 541 in 2011, 556 in 2010, 599 in 2009)

heritage lottery fund | bdr c continental | 17
J:\Current Jobs\TTL\111889 - HLF Applicant Research\Reporting\HLF Summary Report Charts

2.5 External Monitors

- According to HLF records, 15 grantees were appointed an external monitor following their grant award decision. 12 of these confirmed that this was the case.
- Of the 12 that confirmed this was the case, 10 stated it was easy to contact their monitor and 11 stated their monitor was helpful

2.6 HLF Mentors

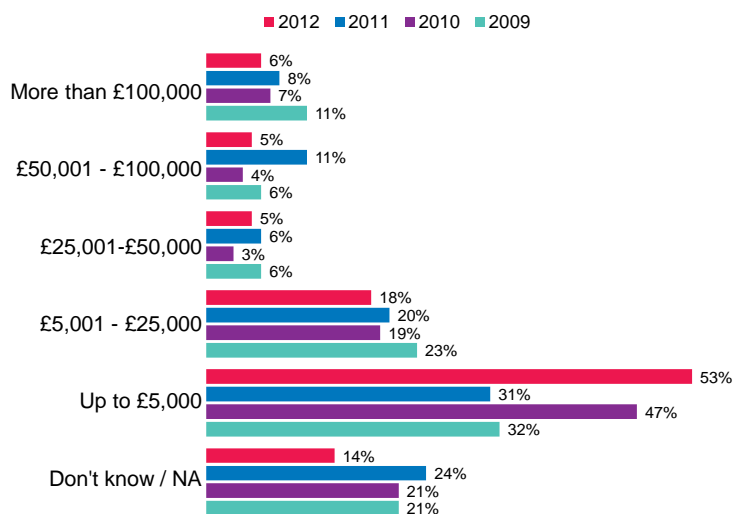
- 13% of grantees had an HLF mentor working with them on their project.
- Of those who had an HLF mentor (56 individuals) the vast majority found contacting them easy (96%) and helpful (98%)

3. Project costs and completion dates

3.1 Project costs

- A fifth of grantees (20%), report that their project costs increased once they had received their grant; a slight drop on the 25% that said this in 2011.
- As demonstrated in the chart below, of the projects that did increase in price, over half did so no more than by £5,000. Around 1 in 10 (11%) increased in price by over £50,000

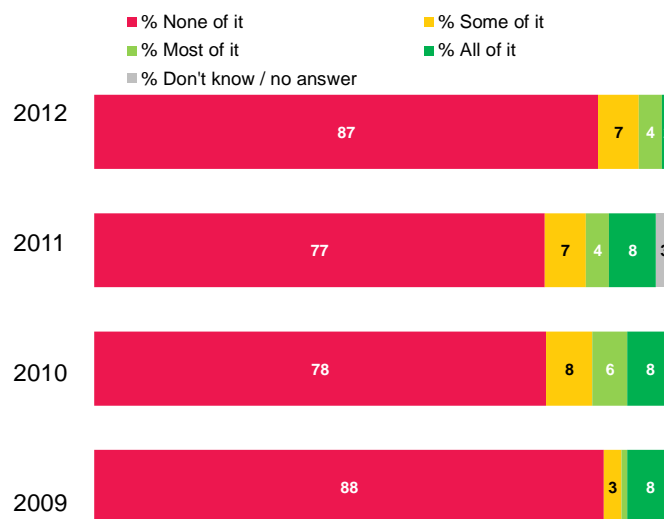
Project cost increases



Base: All grantees whose project costs increased during implementation (85 in 2012, 135 in 2011, 144 in 2010, 184 in 2009)

- Of those that did encounter an increase in project cost, 13% had at least some of their costs met by HLF – a decline on the 20% reported in 2011 – highlighting the importance of communicating to projects that they must be able to cover their expenses upfront.

Additional funding providing by the HLF



Base: All grantees whose project costs increased during implementation (85 in 2012, 135 in 2011, 144 in 2010, 184 in 2009)



J:\Current Jobs\TTL\11889 - HLF Applicant Research\Reporting\HLF Summary Report Charts

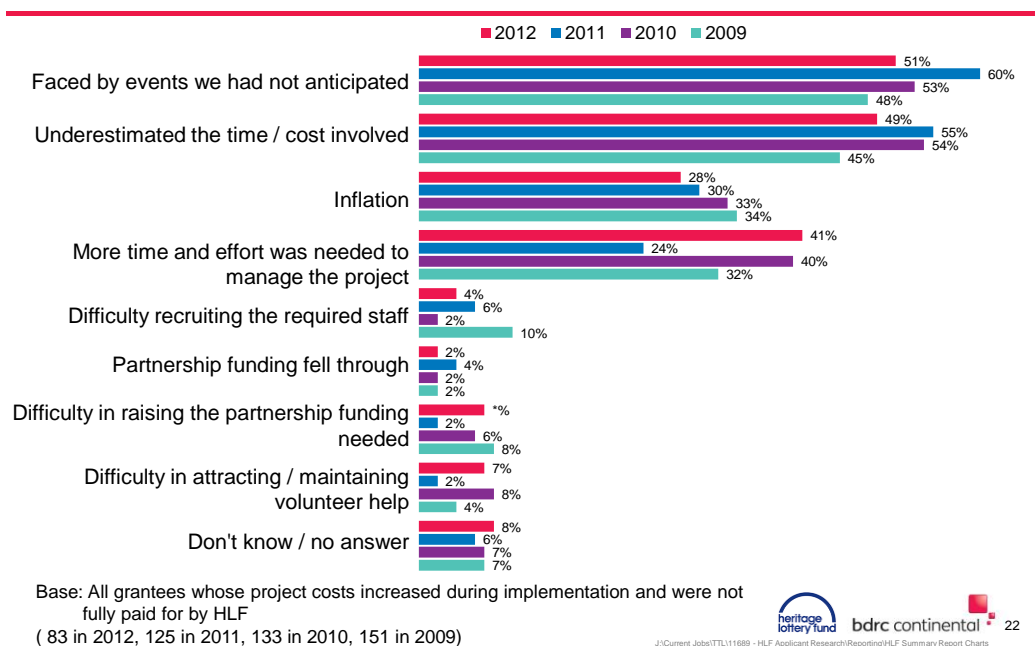
- Importantly, only 1% of those whose increased costs were not entirely covered by HLF were unable to meet them. The top five methods of meeting increased costs include:
 - Using organisation reserves (24%)
 - Donations from members (22%)
 - Funding from a separate grant-making organisation (22%)
 - Event fundraising (18%)
 - Donations from the public (18%)
- The proportion able to secure funding from a separate grant organisation has declined since 2011 (22% compared to 32%) further highlighting the importance that projects keep extra costs to a minimum.
- ‘Unforeseen events’ (51%) and ‘underestimates of time/cost’ (49%) were the reasons most likely to be given for encountering project increases. Other reasons include:
 - More time and effort was needed to manage the project (41%)
 - Inflation (28%)
 - Difficulty in maintaining/attracting voluntary help (7%)
 - Difficulty in raising the partnership funding needed (7%)
 - Difficulty recruiting the required staff (4%)
 - Partnership funding fell through (2%)

- Of the 42 people that stated ‘unforeseen events’ were a factor in influencing project costs increases, the most common reasons given were:
 - Additional work required (11 respondents)
 - Costs generally increased (9 respondents)
 - Extended scope of the project e.g. new opportunities (7 respondents)
 - Weather and environmental issues (4 respondents)

3.2 Completion dates

- Just under half of grantees (49%) report that the completion date of their project was extended or delayed. This is a significant improvement on the 68% that reported this last year.
- As with cost increases, ‘unforeseen events’ and ‘incorrect estimates at the planning stage’ are the most common reasons given for these delays.

Reasons for encountering project cost increases



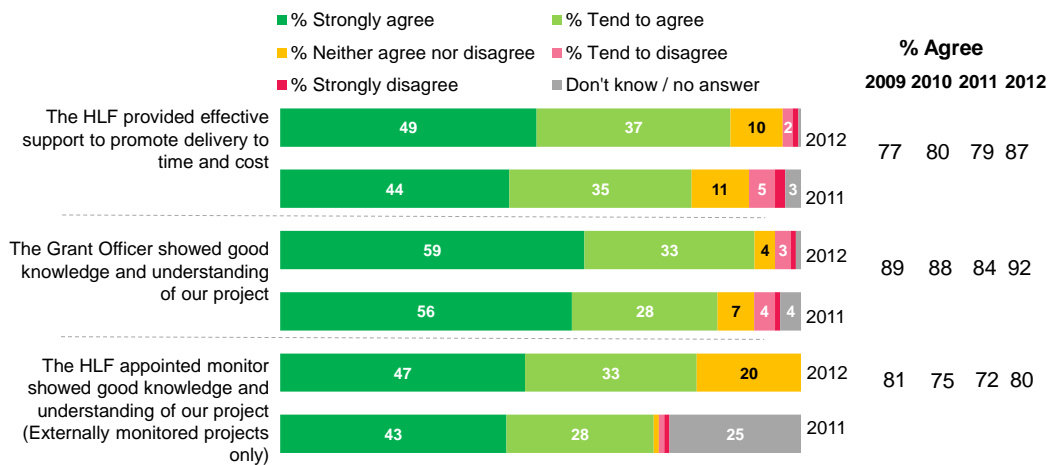
- Of the 104 respondents who encountered events they had not anticipated, the most commonly cited reasons were:
 - Availability of staff (29%)
 - Additional works needed (19%)
 - Adverse weather (9%)
 - Attracting volunteers (7%)
 - Too much interest in project (6%)

4. HLF Support

4.1 HLF support

- As stated elsewhere in this report, BDRC Continental research amongst other grant providers underlines the importance of effective support for grantees throughout the process. There is an expectation of a challenging process, but sufficient support generally ensures positive ratings of the overall process.
- Importantly, opinions of support have increased since 2011. Almost nine in ten grantees (87%) agree that the HLF provide effective support to promote delivery to time and cost (79% in 2011), 92% that the Grant Officer showed good knowledge and understanding of their project (84% in 2011) and 80% that the HLF appointed monitor showed good knowledge and understanding of the project (72% in 2011).
- The increase in opinions of support is a positive reflection of the relationship HLF staff have generated with grantees. Given the importance of support in driving overall satisfaction it is likely that these figures are a key driver of improving overall ratings of the experience.

HLF Support



Base: All grantees (417 in 2012, 67 in 2011, 73 in 2010, 83 in 2009)

4.2 Other HLF-funded projects

BDRC Continental's research elsewhere demonstrates the importance grantees attach to communicating with other similar projects when developing their project. Networking is seen as a platform for idea generation and sharing best practice.

- Almost a third of grantees (29%) spoke to other people involved in an HLF-funded project similar to their own. Of these, 42% were suggested by HLF.
- 89% of these respondents found the experience beneficial
- In line with BDRC Continental's research, 'sharing tips/best practice' (41%), 'sharing experiences' (38%), 'providing support' (23%) and 'providing someone to discuss with' (15%) were the cited benefits for speaking to other HLF funded projects.

Advocacy is an important promotional tool for HLF projects, and it is essential that positive results are shared where possible.

- Importantly, 77% of projects had shared the results of their projects elsewhere.

5. Appendix

5.1 Guide to statistical reliability

The Contract Compliance and Customer Care research are based on a sample of potential respondents rather than the entire population. Therefore the percentage results contained in this report are subject to sampling tolerances. These tolerances vary according to the size of the sample and the percentage figure concerned. For example, for a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 417 respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that this result would not vary more than plus or minus 5 percentage points, from the result that would have been obtained from a census of the entire population (using the same procedures). Indications of the approximate sampling tolerances that may apply in this report are given in the table below.

Approximate sampling tolerance applicable to percentages at or near these levels (at the 95% confidence level)			
Size of sample or sub-group on which survey result is based	10% or 90%	30% or 70%±	50%
All applicants (1308)	1.6	2.5	2.7
All grantees (417)	2.9	4.4	4.8
All approved applicants (792)	2.1	3.2	3.5
All grantees in receipt of a grant in excess of £50,000 (42)	9.1	13.9	15.1

The following table is a guide to the sampling tolerances applicable to comparisons between sub-groups.

Differences required for significance at the 95% confidence level at or near these percentages			
Size of sample or sub-group on which survey result is based	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
Approved (792) vs. rejected applicants (596)	3.2	4.2	5.3
Grantee receiving grant up to £50k (374) vs. grantee receiving grant in excess of £50k (42)	16.0	14.6	16.0