

Scottish Third Sector Research Forum meeting

31 August 2016, 10.30am

Iris Murdoch Building, University of Stirling, Stirling FK9 4LA

Minutes

In attendance:

Steven Marwick (ESS) (Chair), Patty Lozano-Casal (ESS), Jane Marryat (Minutes), Lizzie Leman (GCPH), Andy Dey (ACOSVO), Duncan Thorp (SES), Louise Meikleham (the Scottish Charity Regulator), Ilse MacKinnon (SCVO), Gemma Jackson (VS), Bob Parry (Iriss), Stuart Cable (QMU), Rosalind Tyler-Grieg (IS), Darah Zahran (SE), Cassy Rutherford (TRT), Carolyn Sawyers (BIG), Jaqueline Rae (SG), Fiona Malcolm (SG), Mark Meiklejohn (SG), Alasdair Rutherford (University of Stirling).

Apologies:

Stephen Osborne (UoE), Rushir Shah (SCVO), Gareth Allen (SG), Josie Isles (IS), Sophie Flemig (UoE), Anne McDonald (HIENT), Rob Coward (NES), David Cruikshank (SG).

Welcome and introductions

Steven welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies.

Minutes and matters arising

The **minutes** of the previous meeting (31 May 2016) were approved with one correction in the Annex from Cassy – the name of The Robertson Trust's research project is incorrect.

Action: Cassy to e-mail correct name to ESS.

All actions were completed except for **Action: Ilse** to circulate learning from her focus groups.

Action: Patty to make correction and upload the minutes onto the website.

There were no matters arising.

Update on Forum's work plan 2016/17:

"Let's collaborate for impact" event

Steven introduced the "Let's collaborate for impact event" which will take place on 13 September 2016 at Victoria Quay, Scottish Government (Edinburgh) and

gave background of past annual Let's collaborate events. There has been a lot of interest in this event. It is fully booked and has a waiting list.

Patty spoke to the event agenda, which was circulated to members in advance:

- Patty asked Forum to note a change of the end time which will now be 3pm to accommodate participants' travel.
- There will be three breakout sessions, which will only run once.
- ESS will mix participants by allocating tables during the day.
- ESS will need help from facilitators to capture key learning points.
- Scottish Funding Council can't attend but are keen to work with the Forum.
- Jacqueline will make closing remarks at the end of the event.

Action: ESS to share key messages with Scottish Funding Council.

Patty and Fiona shared plans for the breakout sessions:

1. Supporting social innovation and better collaboration (Fiona Malcolm (SG) and Anne McDonald (HIE)).

Fiona gave an update about this breakout session: Fiona will not be able to attend so her colleagues Anne and Mark Meiklejohn will lead the session. They will speak about the SG's plans for the European Social Fund, which will launch in September. The Fund will support three stages of innovation – trying out ideas (stage 1); prototyping (stage 2), and scaling up or rolling out ideas that work (stage 3). Projects should promote inclusion and tackling poverty (child, food, fuel etc.) and be collaborative between third sector and academics (could also include other partners from private and public sector). Funding will be distributed using a flat rate model: payments based on milestones. Fiona is writing guidance for applications, FAQ and clear scoring criteria for an independent panel (including third sector and academics) to use for decision making. Fiona said that she welcomes TSRF members' advice on these areas. There will be more than one round of applications and collaborations can apply more than once.

Scottish Government want feedback from third sector and academics about how to make this work, how to maximise and disseminate the learning.

Action: ESS to remove Fiona from delegate list.

2. Collaboration what's in it for me? (Nicola Duncan, Scottish Universities Insight Institute)

Patty said that Nicola will run this session. Nicola plans to give background information about SUII; its role as a broker between third sector and academia, and the Research for Excellence Framework (REF). Participants will then discuss issues around impact and collaboration.

3. Share it to shape it: Consultation on TSRF plans (Patty and Cassy)

The two tabled papers for today's meeting will be used to consult participants on TSRF's plans to produce research on 'co-production' and 'inclusive growth'.

Action: Patty to brief Jaqueline.

Questions:

Bob asked about duration of the project. Fiona said that the project will be launched in September 2016 and will finish in December 2018 but there may be some flexibility in end. Projects awards ranges are: stage 1: £30k - £100k, stage 2: £50k-100k and stage 3: £100k-£200k. All projects must comply with State Aid guidance. Funding is for staff costs not for community assets.

Stuart asked about how this would fit in with academic funding processes. Fiona explained they expected the lead organisation to be responsible for finances for the partners and mostly likely to be a third sector organisation or social enterprise whose mechanisms may be more flexible. The practical issues will be fertile ground for learning and the Forum's publications (e.g. Collaborating with academics) will be very useful.

Stuart asked about the popularity of breakout sessions. Patty said that breakout session 1 and 2 had around 20-35 participants booked, whereas breakout session 3 had about 13.

Ilse asked if there was a good mix of academics and third sector organisations. Patty confirmed that there will be at least one academic at each table if not two. 82 people had confirmed but expecting a 10% no show rate.

Stuart said that he is running an action planning event at QMU on 12 September. Patty will be presenting on the *Collaborating with academics* guide. She will be looking out for potential case studies. Stuart assured the Forum that this was not duplication of events but will align to other work.

Subgroup 'thematic' work

Steven introduced item by giving some background into last year's subgroup work which was completed with papers being published about 'The benefits of volunteering' and 'Third Sector Partnership Compass'. At the last Forum meeting members agreed to work on two new areas: 'co-production' and 'inclusive growth'. Patty has written two papers which have been circulated to members in advance. Patty volunteered to lead the 'co-production' subgroup. Steven asked for volunteers to lead the 'inclusive growth' subgroup. Members split into two smaller groups to discuss and comment on the research question and how to achieve an answer.

Action: Members to consider leading/taking part in subgroups.

The following points summarise what was discussed and agreed by the Forum:

Co-production subgroup (present: Rosalind, Stuart, Bob, Lizzie, Andy, Mark, Gemma and Patty):

- After a good discussion the group agreed that the research should:
 - Signpost to examples of organisations that have been involved in genuine co-production (including examples from Forum members)
 - Say what isn't co-production too
 - Set a direction of travel for organisations that would like to do co-production but perhaps don't know how to go about it. Some members felt that a continuum/topology/framework that moves towards genuine culture of co-production would be helpful to organisations to move by steps, if necessary.
 - Look at evidence sources such as: NHS leaflets for practitioners, Iriss's FM, Insights and homelessness project (it might have insights on scaling up co-production), GCPH's Thriving Places, SUII's event on co-production, Link Up Programme (Inspiring Scotland), Third Sector National GIRFEC Project and VHS's Living in the Gap.
 - Look into the role of volunteering, civic engagement (e.g. time banking and care banking) and citizenship.
 - Highlight barriers, enablers and recommendations, as well as successful models of co-production and the principles that underpin these models.
 - Look at areas such as: children and young people, housing, criminal justice (e.g. prisons) and homelessness.
 - Consider focusing on geographical areas (e.g. rural vs urban)
- The group highlighted the importance of identifying the audience for the work from the outset.
- The group felt this research would seek to increase understanding of co-production.

Inclusive growth subgroup (present: Alasdair, Duncan, Carolyn, Louise, Jacqueline, Darah, Fiona, Cassy and Jane):

- There was a deep discussion about what the meaning of inclusive growth is:
 - What do we mean by growth?
 - What does it mean to third sector organisations?
- This discussion challenged some of the assumptions of the SG economic strategy:
 - For third sector organisations growth may not always be the end point. Environmental organisations may challenge some of the ideas around inclusive and growth together. Third sector can exemplify their contribution to 'fair work', 'tackling inequalities' and 'regeneration'
 - For many third sector organisations growth is about stopping decline or about maintaining conditions.

- Research questions considered were:
 - What is the contribution of third sector to inclusive growth? And what could it be? What are the challenges and opportunities to third sector?
 - What does inclusive growth mean to the third sector?
 - How does inclusivity drive growth?
 - How can third sector encourage inclusive practice and growth to come together?
- Conclusion was that the research question should be:
 - How does third sector their role in the economic strategy? Does the third sector feel engaged in the vision of 'inclusive growth' in the economic strategy?
- This is not an evidence review but a new piece of research: This could be a survey of third sector organisations. Having a paper of case studies of examples of TS projects was discounted as a method alone.
- Decided a third sector person should lead this work. Fiona and Darah were happy to support.
- Duncan and Ilse (and Jenny Bloomfield, SCVO) will jointly lead.

Action: Ilse to speak to Jenny.

Action: Duncan and Ilse to liaise to lead this subgroup.

Carolyn, Cassy and Jacqueline requested to be added to the 'co-production' subgroup.

Action: Patty to send Doodle Poll to 'co-production' subgroup members for a meeting at the beginning of October.

Sharing the learning (Members updates)

Steven invited members to give updates on their research.

From Louise (The Scottish Charity Regulator):

The findings of the Scottish Charity Regulator's research on "*Public confidence in the third sector: what do we know?*" were launched on 27th June. Findings were presented in an [infographic and report](#) which are on the Scottish Charity Regulator's website. Louise shared the findings report with the Forum previously. (*Please see "Public confidence in the third sector: what do we know?" in minutes of last meeting - 31st May 2016 for details of research*).

[Results for England and Wales](#) were published by the Charity Commission day before. There was good media coverage. Results for Scotland, and in Northern Ireland (NI survey done by IPSOSMori) public confidence in charities is still good and has not dropped so much but in England there has been a significant drop. Regulation doesn't always infer trust. Showing evidence of the difference made by a charity, personal connection with a charity and knowing how the donation is spent enhances trust and negative media affects people's trust and confidence in charities.

Using the findings the Scottish Charity Regulator are looking at what influences public's perceptions and to change their approach to support organisations at more specific times to encourage accountability. They want to show case good examples such as SSPCA who have a donor strategy, and winners of the Charity Account awards (excellent account and trustees reports).

Questions and comments:

Ilse said SCVO is working in this area i.e. CEO pay and pay ratios in third sector. Also International Charities are not trusted so much.

Bob asked if devolution has made a difference. Louise explained that the survey distinguished between local, Scotland national, UK national and International charities. The results show that local connection was a driver of trust but 'personal connections' were not influenced i.e. if someone had a personal connection to a charity they were likely to continue to donate despite negative press.

Steven praised the format of the findings and suggested that the Forum may want to look at 'How to present research?' at another meeting.

Action: ESS to include results in next TSRF newsletter.

From Rosalind (DRILL, IS):

Applications are being processed now. They have received 13 fast track applications for Scotland (54 in England). 17% of available fund is for Scottish applications. 7 Applications have progressed to the Central Research Committee for decision making.

From Alasdair (University of Stirling):

Think Data by Scottish Network for Third Sector Data – more webinars, road shows and worked shops are planned for this autumn. There will be more information for people staying to hear presentations after lunch.

From Ilse (SCVO):

Charities Aid Foundation have published a report on the network of intermediaries including what they do and what their role is. There are 60 – 70 TSIs with a variety of functions.

Action: Ilse to circulate link to report.

From Gemma (VS):

[Volunteer Scotland](#) has been appointed by Historic Environment Scotland to undertake a study on volunteering across the historic environment sector. Gemma talked about published levels of volunteering in historic environmental sector and exploration of solutions to bring more volunteers to this sector. A survey of Scottish young

people to include 2/3 questions around volunteering will be in the field in a few weeks' time. Results will be out next year.

Also looking at why levels of volunteering are different across the UK. Why is Scotland lower compared with others including Wales and NI - may be methodological differences.

Questions and comments:

Steven asked why different levels of volunteering across jurisdictions matters? Is it as a performance measure? Gemma replied that the SG Third Sector Unit is asking about the difference. It would be helpful if all nations developed a comparable question for the Census and perhaps companies down South are funding volunteering more.

Carolyn – commented that volunteering was a great indicator of the empowerment agenda and in rural areas assets may not describe themselves as volunteers.

From Cassy (TRT):

The Robertson Trust with Scottish Government, Sport Scotland and Sport for Change network have commissioned Research Scotland to do [research](#) to find out how sport and physical activity are being used to benefit individuals and communities across Scotland. Results will be published before Christmas.

Action: ESS to showcase this in TSRF newsletter (December or April).

From Andy (ACOSVO):

ACOSVO launched the [Path to Impact project](#) (BIG UK funded) at beginning of the year which provides access to a diagnostic tool, called the *Core Capacity Assessment Tool* (CCAT). The online assessment identifies specific capacity strengths and challenges, and provides the organisation with a personalised report and a tailored programme of support. 50 third sector organisations were selected in Scotland and 50 in Northern Ireland to participate. This is a three year project – now 9 months in.

From Jacqueline (SG):

Scottish Government has commissioned an evaluation of the third sector interfaces (TSIs) and Voluntary Action Scotland (VAS). This is being finalised and will be shared soon. This work aims to capture evidence to inform the future work of the sector. Laura Hughes (SG) and Social Enterprise Scotland with Glasgow Caledonian University are capturing evidence about delivering contracts in committees – working with strategy and business to evidence their impact.

Action: Jacqueline to circulate findings when published.

From Duncan (SES):

Social Enterprise Scotland have been having round table discussions about co-production process for a while. The International Social Enterprise strategy is to be published.

From Jane (ESS):

ESS has completed a piece of research (summary [here](#)) into funders' views on economic evaluation. Key messages are being worked on following feedback on the research at [FunderFest2016](#) in June and ESS will be working on a guide about conversations about economic evaluation (for third sector organisations and funders).

From Bob (Iriss):

Stuart Muirhead from Iriss is supporting the Scottish Government, Vision and Strategy for Scotland Social Services and is leading on work looking at how organisations are embedding research..

Bob invited Forum members to become reviewers of Iriss's Insights. These are very popular briefings produced covering a wide topic base – next one is on 'appreciative enquiry' followed by one on 'gypsy travellers'.

Action: Members interested in being a reviewer please email Bob: robert.parry@iriss.org.uk.

From Stuart (QMU, NES):

NES has produced a [governance framework](#).

QMU have links with VAS who are leading work on Community Links workers – they are keen to explore what this means to Health and social Care integration.

QMU have an event planned to link third sector organisations with academics. QMU are restructuring their research infrastructure – they have created 6 new research centres as hubs of research activity in different subjects e.g. [Person Centred Practice Research](#)

Action: Stuart to send out information.

Steven said this item of the agenda had gone well with lots of useful contributions and asked members to tell us how to make this agenda item useful and effective in the future.

Action: Members to send back feedback about this section of the agenda to Patty.

Action: Patty to add research updates to the 'research stock-take' spreadsheet.

Sharing learning internally and externally

Steven commented that only a few members had joined the secret Facebook group set up by ESS and suggested that perhaps it was not really working as an internal sharing tool for the Forum. Steven asked members whether this should be abandoned. The discussion that followed can be summarised as follows: some members would prefer not to use Facebook; some thought we had not given it long enough to make a decision on; others suggested that LinkedIn, SLACK, Yammer may be better tools. However, members agreed that for any tool to be useful all members would need to join up.

It was decided that we would keep Facebook for now but we needed a longer term solution.

Steven drew members' attention to the external engagement plan that had been tabled at the last meeting, and which was circulated again for this meeting.

TSRF newsletter has been sent out and the next will be sent at the end of September.

Action: Members to consider joining Facebook (or wait until next meeting).

Action: Members to come with examples of communications tools (in order to share information between members) to talk through next meeting. **ESS** to add item to the next meeting's agenda.

Action: ESS to compile and send TSRF newsletter.

Action: All members whose organisations send a newsletter to link to our newsletter and to let Jane know.

Action: Members to consider writing a blog (300 words) once a year and to communicate with Jane about subject and timing of blog.

AOB

Nothing was raised under this item.

Date of next meeting:

30 November 2016 | 1pm-3.30pm (plus networking lunch)| BIG Lottery Scotland, Glasgow (Please note this will be in BIG's new offices)

Action: Carolyn to host next meeting at BIG.

Mark Meiklejohn volunteered to host the following meeting on 9 March 2017 at Victoria Quay, Scottish Government (Edinburgh).

Patty asked Forum about organising dates for 2017/2018 Forum meetings.

Action: Patty agreed to send a Doodle Poll to all members to organise dates for next year.