

Paul Hamlyn
Foundation

A year
like no
other



Reflecting on PHF's UK grant-making in 2020/21

phf

Contents



Interactive document

You can navigate through the document via the buttons above and below.

Front cover photo: DanceEast
Centre for Advanced Training.
Photo by Alicia Clarke

Introduction

The past year has been unprecedented in so many ways. This review is a chance to share what we have learnt through our UK grant-making in the context of the challenges of Covid-19, and to tell some of the inspiring stories of the organisations and individuals we have supported.

To help us make the most of our learning in this time of change and consider what practice we might want to build on and embed, we commissioned the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) to facilitate a process of reflection with our staff and trustees during the early summer of 2021. A summary of their findings is published [here](#).

We would like to thank all the funded individuals and organisations featured in this review for their time, flexibility and thoughtfulness. We would also like to thank the IVAR team for developing the featured case studies.

“

We hope that by sharing our reflections on the past year, we can improve our own practice, make the most of the opportunities that have emerged and contribute to conversations about the role of civil society and that of funders in creating a future grounded in social justice.

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Moira Sinclair, Chief Executive

Our year in summary

i Contextual UK milestones

i PHF milestones

March

WHO declares the virus a pandemic. Governments of the UK publish a coronavirus action plan which sets out a collective approach to the outbreak.

23 March

Prime Minister Boris Johnson announces the first UK lockdown.

6 April

PHF announces awards of up to £10,000 to every eligible visual artist and composer nominated for Awards for Artists – 113 awards totalling just over £1.1 million.

6 April

PHF announces open-application Funds are paused, to focus on supporting funded organisations to survive the pandemic, through the creation of a £20 million Emergency Fund.

June

Lockdown measures are eased in England, Scotland and Wales with children starting to return to school.

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18 March

PHF office closed; staff shifted to working from home.

25 March

PHF announces £1 million to National Emergencies Trust and London Community Response.

1 April

PHF makes first emergency response grants to support funded organisations. 23 awards made totalling £460,000.

May

The UK's declared death toll from coronavirus rises to more than 32,000, becoming the highest in Europe. First easing of lockdown in Northern Ireland.

30 April


PHF has awarded 107 emergency grants totalling £3 million.

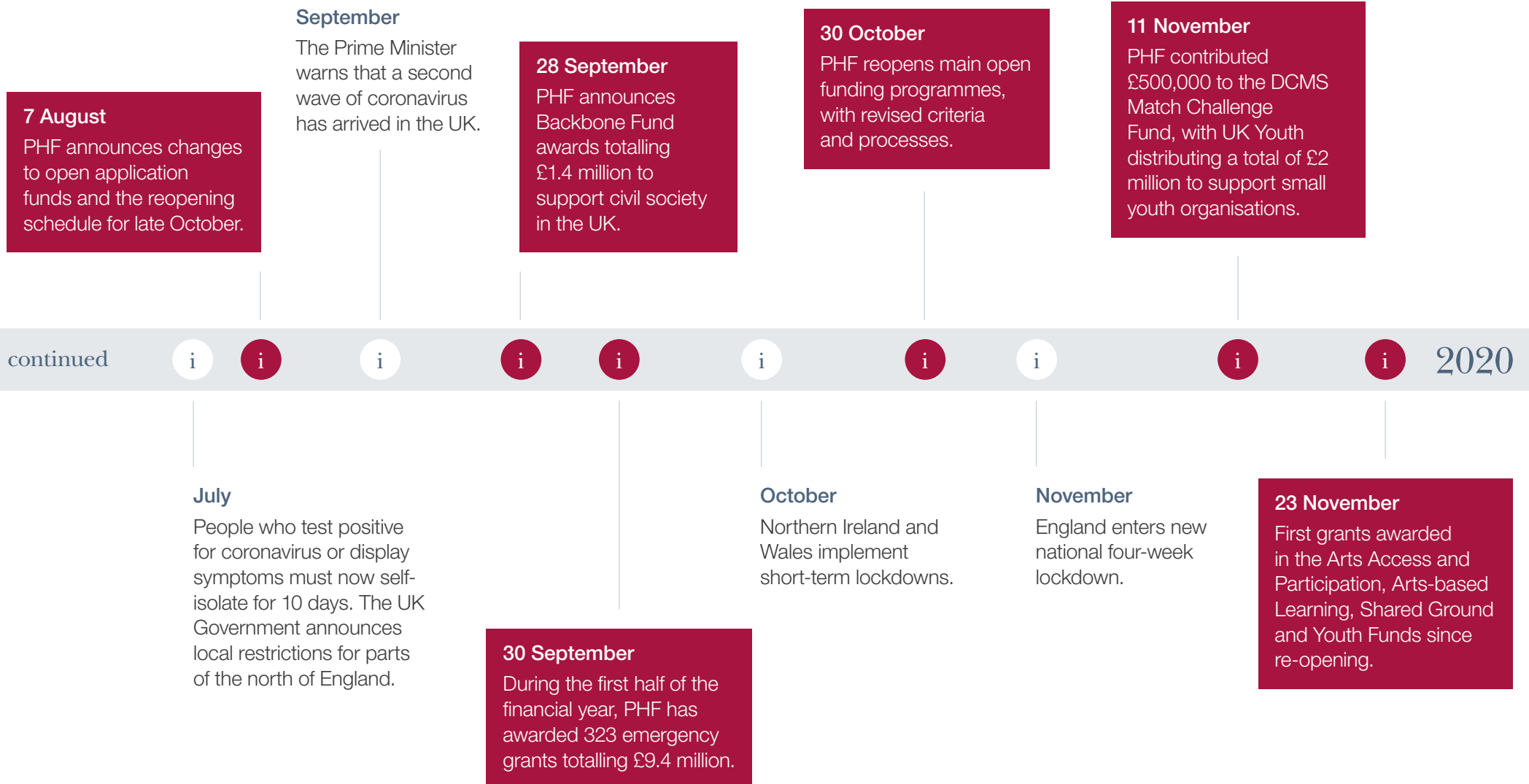
30 June

During the first quarter of 2020/21 PHF has awarded 208 emergency grants totalling £5.4 million.

Our year in summary continued

 Contextual UK milestones

 PHF milestones



Our year in summary continued

i Contextual UK milestones

i PHF milestones

31 December

By the end of the third quarter PHF has awarded 382 emergency grants totalling £11 million.

January

The Prime Minister announces a third national lockdown. The vaccine developed by Moderna is approved for use in the UK.

March

Lockdown restrictions begin to ease.

May

The World Health Organisation classifies the delta variant as a variant of concern.

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2021

December

England's national lockdown comes to an end and is replaced by a strengthened three-tier system. The UK becomes the first country in the world to approve the coronavirus vaccines from Pfizer and BioNTech, and later Oxford and AstraZeneca, as the NHS launches its biggest ever vaccine campaign.

February

The Prime Minister announces a roadmap for easing lockdown restrictions in England and a phased return to schools and begins in Wales.

31 March

As the financial year closes, PHF has awarded 433 emergency grants totalling £12.5 million.

12 May

PHF commits £1 million to the Disasters Emergency Committee India Coronavirus Appeal.

Our year in numbers

We received 1,231 applications requesting a total of £67 million and made 1,219 final decisions of which 63% were approvals.

Investing in young people:

85 grants

Total amount awarded:

£6.1m

Arts access and participation:

15 grants

Total amount awarded:

£3.3m

Migration and integration:

32 grants

Total amount awarded:

£4.4m

Nurturing ideas and people:

148 grants

Total amount awarded:

£1.6m

Other grants and programmes:

45 grants

Total amount awarded:

£4.2m

Total number of UK grants and awards:

774

Total amount awarded:

£35.1m

Education and learning through the arts:

16 grants

Total amount awarded:

£2.5m

Covid Response Fund:

433 grants

Total amount awarded:

£12.5m*

* Excludes £1 million awarded to the National Emergencies Trust and London Community Response Fund in March 2020

Where the grants go

£35m
Total value of grants

Many of our grants support work in multiple regions or countries. These grants are additional to those indicated on the map.

UK wide

Funding: £12.46 million

Number of grants: 288

UK multi-country (in 2 or 3 UK countries)

Funding: £2.1 million

Number of grants: 44

England, multi-region

Funding: £4.55 million

Number of grants: 85

Northern Ireland

Funding: £1.16 million

Number of grants: 17

North West

Funding: £1.02 million

Number of grants: 26

West Midlands

Funding: £591,000

Number of grants: 23

Scotland

Funding: £1.34 million

Number of grants: 25

North East

Funding: £605,000

Number of grants: 16

Yorkshire and the Humber

Funding: £1.4 million

Number of grants: 27

East Midlands

Funding: £217,000

Number of grants: 11

East of England

Funding: £1.28 million

Number of grants: 16

South East

Funding: £1.46 million

Number of grants: 27

Wales

Funding: £206,000

Number of grants: 9

South West

Funding: £2.07 million

Number of grants: 34

London

Funding: £4.57 million

Number of grants: 121

Main developments in our grant-making this year

In the emerging crisis, we focussed our efforts on being more responsive: speed was important – getting money out to where it was needed, but so too was our ongoing communication with the organisations and people we fund, to understand the changing impact of the pandemic on the communities they work with. We offered flexibility and simplified our requirements, enabling funding to be repurposed and timelines shifted.

An important year for grant-making

The volume of grant-making was significant, with more than twice as many grants as a normal year. We made a substantial investment in responding to Covid with an emergency response totalling £13.3 million, including 433 emergency grants, 31 Act for Change Fund grants and 113 Awards for Artists.

A coordinated response

We contributed to several pooled funds and also tried new models of delegated grant-making through other organisations.

We drew on the experience of engaging in the London Funders coordinated response to the Grenfell Tower disaster which provided a model of collaboration and quick response.

Emergency response in numbers



Main developments in our grant-making this year

Our main funding offer is now more flexible

We signed the joint statement to “stand with the sector” and acted on our commitment to listen to funded organisations, offer financial flexibility, and adjust or remove many of our normal requirements.

Decision-making for emergency grants was delegated from our existing panels to staff and trustees, meeting on a weekly or fortnightly basis.

Our open grant-making programmes paused in late March 2020 and reopened at the end of October with small revisions to criteria, a more flexible funding offer and simplified processes.

Applicants can now request core, project or other support that best meets their needs and ambitions.

Adapting in times of change

We tried new ways to be more open and to be a good partner to those we fund. We continued to invest in beyond-grant support through initiatives like our Evidence and Learning Support Schemes, Youth Fund Learning Network and support in our Ideas and Pioneers Fund.

We introduced an ‘enquiry call’ to provide guidance and support to new potential applicants in our open funds.

We increased our responsiveness to requests for funding – even if they sat outside of our normal funding parameters or timelines.

We are committed to becoming an anti-racist funder, and started to collect and analyse diversity data on the protected characteristics of the leadership of organisations that apply to us, and to use the Funders for Race Equality Alliance audit tool to analyse our grant-making.



DanceEast Summer School,
Photo credit: Lesley Van Dijk

“

We acted on our commitment to listen to funded organisations, offer financial flexibility and adjust our normal requirements.

”



Case study

Unlimited/ Shape Arts

Unlimited is an arts commissioning programme which works to improve access to culture for disabled people by providing opportunities for disabled artists, training and participatory arts programmes, delivered by Shape Arts and Artsadmin.

Funding supported an extension of existing commissioning support for a key group of artists who had their work significantly disrupted by Covid-19, expanding reach and providing responsive, emergency funding to ad hoc requests from disabled artists who were so disproportionately hit by Covid. The funding was: *'Salvation! Stopped people taking out payday loans and they were still able to have a presence, having work they could sell and keep a profile. It saved people's work lives – and no doubt actual lives'*.

The project highlighted the importance of responsiveness, really listening and not making assumptions about the needs of artists: *'One size does not fit all'*. Through this approach, Unlimited was able to manage a wider range of relationships: *'In order to deliver the best we could we had to do it differently'*.

Much learning has been embedded – including thinking about reflection and evaluation processes for funded artists. To limit undue strain on Unlimited, further funding and capacity will be needed to ensure support can continue, building on the increased levels of trust, flexibility and responsiveness developed during the last year.

“
Salvation! Stopped people taking out payday loans and they were still able to have a presence, having work they could sell and keep a profile. It saved people's work lives – and no doubt actual lives.
”



Photo credit: Rachel Cherry

What we funded

Our open funds in the UK, and the grants awarded through our Covid Response Fund, are closely aligned with the priorities in our strategy. This section provides an overview of the grants made and our learning within these areas.



Interactive document

You can navigate through our strategic priorities by clicking on them below and via the buttons at the top.

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Emergency
grant-making

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Investing in
young people

[Read more](#)

3

Migration and
integration

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participation

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and people

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1 Emergency grant-making

Our main response to the Covid emergency was a quick response fund that offered flexible funding to currently funded organisations and individuals. We reached out to all grant-holders within the first weeks of the pandemic and used these conversations, and others later in the year, to help identify where our funding could make a difference.

Later on, we extended the Fund to select other organisations and individuals. In total, around a fifth of emergency grants went to those who did not hold another grant with PHF.

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Within days of the start of the first lockdown PHF was making emergency grants.

”

Supporting different sectors

We analysed where our funding was going across our strategic priority areas. Funds supported work across all aspects of our strategy, but most frequently these went to organisations in our ‘Investing in young people’ priority, totalling around a quarter of all emergency grants, with a further 15% going to organisations working in the field of migration and a similar number going to support organisations funded through our Arts Access and Participation theme.

In numbers



* (Contribution from Covid Response Fund: £520,000)

1 Emergency grant-making

How emergency grants were used

Grant-holders adapted quickly in a variety of ways and many used the funding to meet multiple needs – some were offering direct hardship relief including food, shelter and access to phones and data to mitigate the effects of digital exclusion in their communities, as many services switched to online delivery. Around a third of our grants included a contribution towards these types of costs.

Some organisations used the funding to help adapt their services – this included the purchase of hardware like laptops, as well as providing training, recruitment and developing new ways of working. In other circumstances, organisations found that the shift in the context and the move to online working meant a huge uplift in demand for their services, and our funding contributed to their efforts to scale their offer.

In other circumstances our grants were used to support cashflow or core costs associated with the disruption to delivery and the need to replan for the future.

“

Grant-holders adapted quickly in a variety of ways and many used the funding to meet multiple needs.

”

Responding to structural inequality

Early on in the year it was clear that issues related to racism and structural inequality were impacting on the way that Covid was experienced in communities. We were alert to these issues, and supported work that aimed to redress the balance.

Based on an audit of our grants using the Funders for Race Equality Alliance audit tool, we found that 10% of our emergency funding went to support organisations that both have a mission to support Black and minoritised communities, and that have a majority leadership from those communities. These grants totalled £1.1 million.

We are aware that we need to do more to address structural inequality across the sectors we work in. You can read more about our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion on [p34](#).

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2 Investing in young people

PHF has offered core funding, through the Youth Fund and Youth Strategic Investment Fund, for the past five years. The funding approach has been conducive to building strong relationships with funded organisations, which encouraged people to turn quickly to PHF during the first lockdown and have candid conversations about pressures and priorities.

Responding to Covid

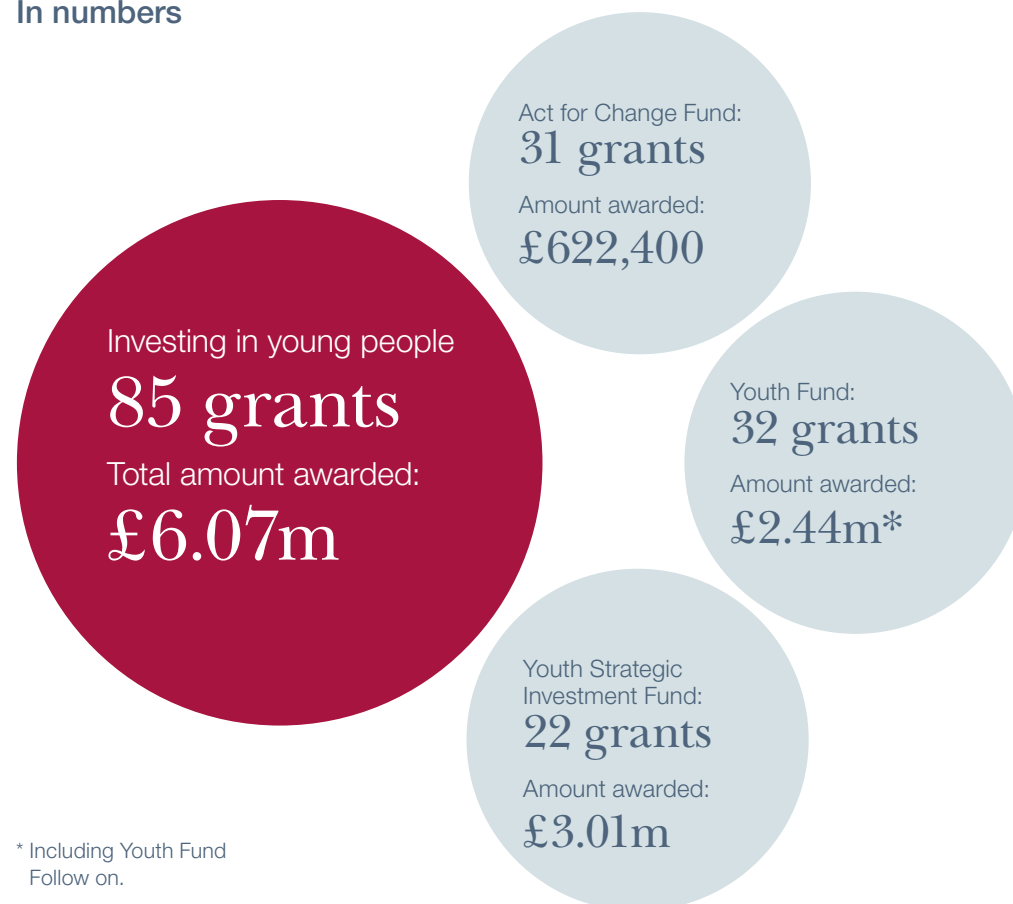
Organisations supporting young people demonstrated incredible commitment to reaching young people despite Covid restrictions, increasing collaboration, using creativity to adapt and respond to changing needs and ensuring young people received appropriate information, advice, connections and activities.

Having experienced over ten years of under-investment, the youth sector is practised in stretching resources and managing huge demand.

The pandemic has intensified the challenges of longer-term sustainability, and has highlighted and exacerbated existing issues for young people. Critically, funded organisations have continued to advocate for young people to influence these responses and to have a say in how the sector and wider society recovers and rebuilds.

PHF's support has helped organisations to do what was needed – whether this was to continue, intensify or pivot their work as circumstances changed.

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2 Investing in young people

Adapting and learning

During the first lockdown, out of necessity, many organisations rapidly adapted their services to support young people online. In some circumstances there are advantages to these approaches – extending an organisation’s geographic reach or enabling people to contribute in different ways, but there is still work to do on understanding good ‘virtual’ practice. Meeting changing needs post-Covid will be a challenge.

Although planned prior to the pandemic, we launched a Youth Fund Learning Network during this year to help share learning, provide peer support and increase connections between funded organisations. The network has offered action learning sets and communities of practice and we’ve seen keen interest in some topics – particularly mental health and wellbeing of leaders and staff – reflecting their current relevance.

“Organisations supporting young people demonstrated incredible commitment to reaching young people despite covid restrictions, increasing collaboration, using creativity to adapt and respond to changing needs and ensuring young people received appropriate information, advice, connections and activities.

”

We will continue to provide much needed core funding to organisations supporting young people moving forward but will adapt our offer to include funding to sustain as well as to improve and grow impact, both directly with young people but also at a systemic and structural level. We will look to support collaboration and focus on initiatives that strengthen infrastructure and that enhance youth voice, insight and power. We will work hard to ensure our funding reaches those young people most impacted by inequality and injustice which has been starkly evident over the last year.

“

We will work hard to ensure our funding reaches those young people most impacted by inequality and injustice.

”

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Case study

School of Hard Knocks

School of Hard Knocks offers a combination of sport, group sessions and mentoring to help young people improve their physical and mental wellbeing.

PHF funding supported the integration of a psychology-based behavioural support offer into a schools programme in Wales.

Covid-19 presented a radical change of context which School of Hard Knocks responded to creatively, positively and flexibly: *'Working out how this could work!'* It also required patience and emotional intelligence in helping both staff and the young people in the programme through the experience.

During lockdowns, delivery shifted to online support – a challenge for an organisation based on rugby activities, used to working around a pitch! Careful consideration was required to take account of the context schools found themselves in, the variety of online platforms in use, safeguarding issues, and the fact that the majority of young people involved were not engaging in online lessons.

Online quizzes and challenges were developed and mentoring support provided. Some young people actively preferred online engagement, or using chat, rather than face-to-face contact.

Relationship building was central to the response – building a rapport with young people online that they *'wouldn't necessarily have in school.'* School of Hard Knocks found that their learning was useful to the wider youth sector, facilitated partly by contact through PHF. School of Hard Knocks will continue to respond to the huge impact Covid has had for young people – particularly their mental health and wellbeing and the new issues and topics that have surfaced since March 2020.

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It required patience and emotional intelligence in helping staff and young people through the experience.

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Photo credit: Torran McDougal and Elinor Snowsil'

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3 Migration and integration

The migration sector has long experience of being incredibly adaptable in the context of policy and funding uncertainty and responded quickly to the challenges of the pandemic. Organisations we fund showed an immediate grasp of new needs both during the first lockdown and as the deep impact on communities has unrolled.

Responding to Covid

The context is likely to remain incredibly challenging for this sector going forward, both because of the disruption to traditional funding pipelines and to the increasingly hostile political context for this work. However, funding has helped to alleviate real hardship for people at the grassroots and supported many agile and determined organisations to regroup to face whatever comes next.

Over the past few years the Shared Ground Fund has concentrated funding around four long-term objectives: migration system reform, access to support services, civic participation and public perceptions of migration and integration, drawing from the Fund's Theory of Change (ToC). Over the past year, the team have been working to update the ToC and using a systems change lens to think critically about our aims and approaches. Our grant-making draws on this thinking, while responding to the current context.

In numbers

Migration and integration:

32 grants

Total amount awarded:

£4.35m

Shared Ground Fund:

29 grants

Amount awarded:

£4.13m

Special initiatives and projects:

3 grants

Amount awarded:

£226,000

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3 Migration and integration

What we are funding

The Shared Ground Fund supports a range of work including service provision, strategic litigation, research and campaigning. There are a couple of particularly strong themes within the grants awarded since re-opening:

One cluster of grants is aiming to develop and enhance the quality, capacity and accessibility of immigration advice. Some of these are focussing on specific groups like those caught up in the Windrush scandal or requiring the EU Settlement Scheme, with many using tools like alliance building, partnership working and system innovation to attempt to improve access to justice.

There is also a strong theme of advocacy and campaigning with a view to both shifting public narratives about migration and policy change in relation to the migration system. This work is tackling issues like destitution, detention, the hostile environment and racial justice. These grants include work on framing and messaging, amplifying the voices of those with lived experience and relationship building and collaboration.

Over the coming year we anticipate continuing to fund a variety of approaches and working closely with the organisations we fund to develop shared insights as to how we can most effectively collaborate and promote change in the migration system.



Photo credit: Refugee Action

“Funding has helped to alleviate real hardship for people at the grassroots.”

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Case study**Project 17**

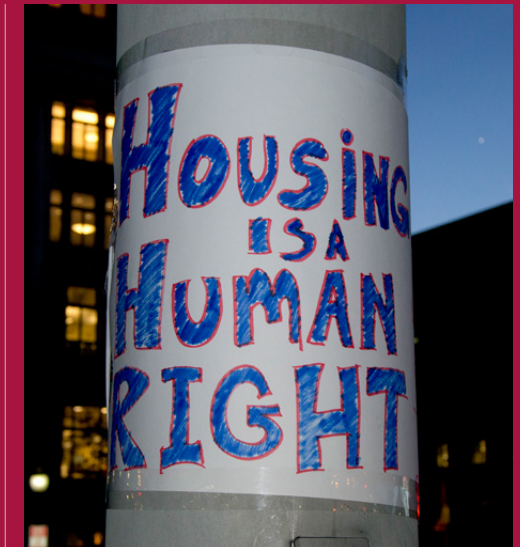
Project 17 works to reduce destitution among families with no access to mainstream welfare because of their immigration status. PHF funded Project 17 to develop policy and campaigns work, led by people with lived experience of no recourse to public funds.

Covid-19 made life disproportionately more difficult for people with no recourse to public funds – with increasing vulnerability to homelessness, decreasing access to education, and uncertainty in accessing basic needs such as food. Project 17 adapted quickly and funding enabled expansion of the work they were already doing. Services were made accessible by phone, increasing the number of people that could be supported, as there was no longer any limit in geographical reach. The principle was to ensure families were able to access statutory rights and entitlements through advice and advocacy, with additional support from emergency funding to cover immediate needs.

Policy work pivoted to focus on the impact of the lockdown and Project 17 increasingly had the ear of government and a wider network of organisations with shared aims, intervening in a successful judicial review of Home Office policy. Project 17's focus on the welfare of staff and clients during the pandemic will continue to be a priority, alongside reflecting on strategic direction, sustainable funding and continuing to put people with no recourse to public funds at the centre of their work.

“
Project 17 adapted quickly and funding enabled expansion of the work they were already doing.

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Case study**Settled**

Kate Smart, CEO of Settled, describes the organisation as an independent charity established in 2019 to respond to the needs of Europeans in the UK who are affected by Brexit.

The pandemic did change the way Settled was working but, initially, it wasn't front of mind, as the looming deadlines of the EU Settlement Scheme had their own sense of urgency. However, for Settled's service users, numerous challenges quickly emerged – like loss of employment and barriers to making applications.

Settled continued to help a small number of the most urgent cases face to face, but most of the work moved online.

The volunteers with whom Settled works in different parts of UK had to move rapidly to working online and contacting people by phone: 'We realised very quickly that providing services online was the best means of communication, especially Facebook as it runs in so many different languages and is used by a broad spectrum of people. Yes, we lost that human contact, but we were able to increase our reach very quickly which was a bigger gain'.

Despite the inevitable challenges and adjustments of remote working, all volunteers have been retained, remaining motivated, engaged and feeling that they belong to the organisation. The retention of the organisation's truly human qualities is significant. Knowing what the needs of their client group are, and how the pandemic has created further complexities for them, Settled realise now that expansion is needed, and additional funding will be essential to help them keep going and reaching out to greater numbers.

“

We realised very quickly that providing services online was the best means of communication, especially Facebook as it runs in so many different languages and is used by a broad spectrum of people. Yes, we lost that human contact, but we were able to increase our reach very quickly which was a bigger gain.

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4 Arts access and participation

The arts and cultural sector has faced overwhelming uncertainty and made significant shifts in their approaches to delivery during the past year. There are particular concerns for freelance workers, including artists, who comprise such a significant and diverse section of the sector's workforce. Given the uncertainty over what might come, even as restrictions are eased, planning for future months remains fraught.

Responding to Covid

We have seen many arts organisations and artists stepping into the challenges caused by Covid. Through existing relationships with their local communities, some organisations pivoted towards coordinating emergency response work, others developing new approaches to support creativity and wellbeing during periods of restriction, and many exploring digital and novel approaches to delivering work to support and engage with their communities.

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We are funding more diverse organisations than we were doing previously which has pushed us to think more critically about our processes and practice.

”

In numbers

Arts access and participation fund:

15 grants

Amount awarded:

£3.3m

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4 Arts access and participation

Sharpening our focus

We revised the funding criteria within our Arts Access and Participation Fund, which reopened in October. The criteria have a sharper focus on work with communities experiencing structural and systemic inequalities, shifting power within those relationships, funding organisations that are both committed to being diverse and inclusive internally as well as working in ways that are seeking to address structural inequalities more broadly, and where there is a commitment to learning and reflection.

This shift in focus, and the flexibility of our emergency funding, has meant that we are funding more diverse organisations than we were doing previously which has pushed us to think more critically about our processes and practice.

Our new offer of enquiry calls has been especially popular in this Fund – between October 2020 and March 2021 the team had calls with 200 potential applicants.

The new focus is bringing change to our portfolio with approximately half the grants going to organisations not previously funded by PHF. Many include a strong emphasis on empowerment and inclusion of people at risk of marginalisation, for example:

- those with or seeking refugee status
- people that identify as LGBTQ+ or a minority gender
- Deaf or disabled adults, young people and their families
- people identifying as Black, Asian or from other minoritised ethnic or cultural backgrounds.

Within the work funded there are strong themes around skills and leadership development, co-creation approaches, developing relationships, cultural connections and building communities, as well as support for developing evaluation and learning approaches.

“

Our new offer of enquiry calls has been especially popular in this Fund – between October 2020 and March 2021 the team had calls with 200 potential applicants.

”

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Case study

Micro Rainbow

Micro Rainbow supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) asylum seekers and refugees through their social and economic inclusion programme, providing housing, legal support, skills and employability training and a comprehensive “Moving on”

programme for their members who are transitioning from being an asylum seeker to a refugee.

During Covid-19, services were rapidly moved online and digital access ensured for service users. Most of their members suffer from digital poverty so Micro Rainbow made sure to provide data and equipment for all to connect. The goal was to develop an online community and an online peer support space to combat social isolation: *‘While service users were frustrated to not meet in person, they felt it was the next best thing. For us, we have been able to increase our reach beyond London, Birmingham and Leeds, with people being able to join workshops from all over the UK and feel connected’.*

Micro Rainbow also started the ‘Moving Together’ programme, a dance project funded by PHF to go online: *‘Many of our members have suffered serious persecution and trauma. People found this a great initiative, both creative and healing, to get in tune with their bodies and minds. Also it was a lot of fun’.*

As the pandemic moves on, there is continuous change in how things are done. Together with their members Micro Rainbow is exploring a blended approach to ensure a better reach: *‘We cannot guarantee that our members will be present at every programme, due to deportation, and various other challenges in the life of asylum seekers.’*

As an organisation we will always be there and be consistent, with the knowledge that our members can always check in with us whenever they need to. It does not matter if sessions are missed, our motto is whoever is in the space at the time are the right people in that space and time’.



Photo credit: Micro Rainbow CIC

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Photo credit:
Jason Tan

Case study

Access All Areas

Access All Areas makes disruptive theatre and performance by learning disabled and autistic artists.

During Covid-19, focus shifted to ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of those involved in the organisation. This was achieved through characteristic creativity, flexibility and focus on the needs of individuals: *'A lot of people we work with have barely left the house since the pandemic'*. It was supported by an emergency grant in November 2020.

A one-to-one way of working involved creative support workers alongside learning disabled artists. Using technology helped artists keep on creating, continue to have a voice and, in the words of one of the productions, show that they are *'Still Here'*.

During the pandemic, there has been even greater focus on learning disabled people taking on leadership roles, and recognition of the capacity and funding that is required to support this effectively. It is necessary to be uncompromising to provide the right kind of support to people – *'not a sticking plaster'*. The legacy will be a sector that accepts and is pushed by this work: inclusive and changing the way people think.



Photo credit:
Access All Areas

“
A lot of people we work with have barely left the house since the pandemic.
”

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5 Education and learning through the arts

In this area we focus our effort on funding partnership working between arts organisations and schools. This work has been hugely disrupted over the past year due to the majority of students learning remotely and then restrictions on school visitors. Early on, arts in schools looked at high risk, but schools and arts organisations have adapted and learned how to do things that felt impossible a year ago.

Responding to Covid

In some cases work has been put on pause, but there have been many innovative steps taken with the move towards digital learning approaches, and in support of the key role that schools have played to sustain their pupils' nutrition, health and wellbeing during both term time and holidays.

What we are funding

PHF funds have supported the visibility and credibility of arts-based approaches to teaching and learning, as well as activity.

In numbers

Education and learning through the arts:

16 grants

Total amount awarded:

£2.48m

Arts-based Learning Fund:
6 grants

Amount awarded:
£1.07m

Teacher Development Fund:
10 grants

Amount awarded:
£1.41m

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Education and learning through the arts

Teacher Development Fund

Our Teacher Development Fund supports two-year collaborations between arts organisations and clusters of schools to support teachers and school leaders to deliver and embed arts-based learning approaches. Within this Fund we have seen a range of approaches to dealing with the disruption, many projects chose to pause delivery and extend the timeframe for their work. Grants awarded in this year, for Round 4, have a new specific focus on blended approaches (online and in person) to supporting teachers' learning. Many Round 4 applications focused on how arts-based approaches could support pupils' learning needs in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Arts-based Learning Fund

Disruption to both the arts and education sectors has meant that partnerships have needed to regroup, rebuild and replan.

In October we revised our guidelines with a tighter focus on educational inequality. Early grants made in the Arts-based Learning Fund build on established practice to meet needs exacerbated by the pandemic, others are looking to support pupil engagement and wellbeing through co-constructing new creative curricula, and others are developing approaches to digital pedagogy. We are seeing strong applications coming through which gives us confidence for the future.

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Schools and arts organisations have adapted and learned how to do things that felt impossible a year ago.

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Case study

S.M.I.L.E-ing Boys Project

Kay Rufai started the S.M.I.L.E-ing Boys Project with a focus on ‘mental health and wellbeing for Black boys in London, working in schools’, as a direct response to a rise in youth stabbings.

The pandemic, as well as the Black Lives Matter movement, increased demand. However, during the first national lockdown when pupils moved to studying at home, the work couldn't take place, as feedback from alumni highlighted that moving online would not be viable, largely because of difficulties with access for the target group.

When schools re-opened for vulnerable children in June, the project went ahead in a few settings: *‘For the young people it was an interesting experience with them being the only children in school. They were able to express how they were navigating the pressures and challenges of being at school, and the uncertainties of their parents being out of the house’*. At the same time, exhibitions took place on social media and Instagram. In the face of myriad challenges, the commitment to the work and willingness to improvise was key.

Boys have found the photography and creative writing-based project very helpful for sharing their emotions and thoughts with each other; for parents, it has provided a safe place for their sons and an opportunity to see them in a different way. With high demand for this work, the project has expanded its team of facilitators and, in addition to delivering to more schools, will also work with teachers, *‘upskilling them to unpack cultural themes that disproportionately impact young Black people’*.

“

They were able to express how they were navigating the pressures and challenges of being at school, and the uncertainties of their parents being out of the house.

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Photo credit: Kay Rufai

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Case study

DanceEast

DanceEast uses blended learning approaches to support dance teaching – applying digital technologies to augment and enhance real time experiences and physicalising wider curriculum learning in primary schools across Suffolk.

Learnings from a previous Paul Hamlyn Foundation funded 'Explore and Test' project meant the organisation felt equipped to react swiftly when lockdown happened *'when the pandemic came, we were busily pre-recording a first series of sessions for digital delivery to replace in person classes. The Explore and Test project gave us the confidence to grow and learn – applying the knowledge we had built up to our wider programme of community engagement and performances'*.

It was apparent that the imperative was to concentrate on what was possible, rather than dwell on what was lost. In contrast to the shutdown of live performances and touring, DanceEast was able to replicate some of that live experience in another way, with a response that was characterised by optimism and positivity.

Clearly, throughout this period of difficulty and dramatic change driven through by the pandemic, schools have been learning rapidly about online lesson delivery and the use of digital communications for interaction



Photo credit: Lesley Van Dijk

with pupils. Coming out of this time, DanceEast has discovered that improved confidence, knowledge and infrastructure within schools means that they are now receptive to working in a blended way – creating great benefits for the organisation's 'More and Better' project, that extends previous activity through the innovative use of technologies.

DanceEast's reflection on this period is that partnerships built upon honesty, goodwill, shared values and expectations are integral to success. This will be crucial as the organisation moves into an exciting phase of rebalancing new partnerships and priorities, with pre-pandemic ambitions.

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6 Nurturing ideas and people

We fund a range of social entrepreneurs, artists and innovators under this strategic priority. The individuals are very diverse and work across a range of sectors. Many undertake work in a freelance capacity. This year, they experienced challenges around lockdowns, childcare, shielding and financial precarity where funding pipelines and employment were disrupted.

For many this period has been incredibly stressful and inhibited progress just as they were starting to build momentum.

It is for these reasons we set aside our usual approach to funding Awards for Artists in 2020/21, making awards of up to £10,000 to all 113 nominated artists; and have drawn on that experience in the current year 2021/22 to ensure our support is continuing to reach a broader range of artists.

In numbers

Nurturing ideas and people:

**148 grants
and awards**

Total amount awarded:

£1.62m

Awards for Artists:

113 awards

Amount awarded:

£1.12m

Ideas and
Pioneers Fund:

35 grants

Amount awarded:

£498,000

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6 Nurturing ideas and people

Ideas and Pioneers Fund

In our Ideas and Pioneers Fund, we have seen the importance of flexibility in our funding offer, close relationships with individuals, the support package and the work to build connections and sustain a sense of community which have all helped to support many through a very challenging time. This fund has proved very popular since re-opening in October and we are receiving lots of strong and inspiring applications from a diverse range of people with equally diverse ideas for social change.

Within both the applications received and the grants awarded this year, we've seen an increase in younger pioneers (aged under 30) which we believe reflects the shift in our communications and marketing approach.

What we are funding

Although the Fund is incredibly diverse, there are some key themes in the grants awarded over the past year, for example, ideas to develop more inclusive and tailored approaches in education, work focussed on mental health and wellbeing, ideas aimed at building on the creative strengths of people, particularly young people, from Black, Asian and other minoritised ethnicities and a strong seam of work also focussed on inclusion for disabled people.

Many of the grants build on strengths within local communities and are developing ideas born from lived experience with the resulting attention to intersectional identities, cultural fit and creative approaches.

“

We have seen the importance of flexibility in our funding offer, close relationships, the support package and the work to build connections and sustain a sense of community.

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[6. Nurturing ideas and people](#)**Case study**

Stewarding Loss

Stewarding Loss was established with a grant through the Ideas and Pioneers Fund in 2019. It set out to explore the idea of a dedicated fund to support better organisational endings.

“ This is structural, if things ended well in the sector, the sector would be healthier overall.

”

It has grown into a collective of organisational designers, social innovators, facilitators, coaches and more, all united by their commitment to bringing about the shifts needed for organisations to end well: with care, intention, design and a focus on legacy. *‘We’re not interested in endings simply for the sake of endings. We’re interested in endings because we believe that a good ending creates conditions for what comes next and for brighter beginnings’.*

The work began shortly before the pandemic and went on to take on greater significance in the sector as themes of loss and ending reverberated through communities and society: *‘Our work became more widely an exploration of what better or good ending can look like in civil society, what are the gaps to support organisations to end well, and what further support is needed?’*

To uncover answers to these questions, Stewarding Loss consulted leaders of closed organisations as well as experts in endings and loss more widely including grief and bereavement practitioners, psychologists, end-of-life care providers and many more. In November 2020, they published a range of tools including their Seven Principles For Better Organisational Endings which uniquely combined the emotional, logistical and technical elements of organisational endings – elements which are all too often kept separate. *‘As one person said in our research: ‘This is structural, if things ended well, our sector would be healthier overall’.*

In 2020 Stewarding Loss launched the Careful Closures Fund, which is a small pilot fund available to organisations to help them end better, supported by PHF. With further recent funding, Stewarding Loss is looking to explore the idea of an infrastructure for better organisational endings in civil society.

“

Our work became more widely an exploration of what better or good ending can look like in civil society, what are the gaps to support organisations to end well, and what further support is needed?

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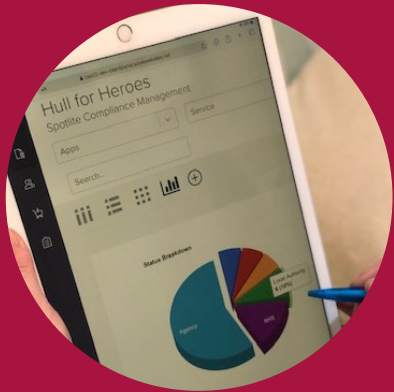
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Case study

SafeGarden

SafeGarden CIC aims to minimise the data problems faced by vulnerable people through an ‘assetlocked Data Trust’.

‘A vulnerable person will only need to register their personal details once and then they will be able to choose which other organisations will be able to access this data.’

With support from PHF’s Ideas and Pioneers fund, SafeGarden is piloting this work with veterans’ charities. Paul from SafeGarden described the funding, networking and training provided as *‘fuelling the passion’* for this work. During the pilot, *‘learning is happening all the time’* – about the potential benefits of this work for wider social inclusion, as well as how digital exclusion can make life worse for vulnerable people.

The pandemic has been challenging for a project which was partly premised on bringing groups together in a room: *‘it has been emotional and intense’*. Video calls lack the dynamism and direct connection of face-to-face communication and have resulted in an increased workload due to the necessity of one-to-one online meetings with partners.

Despite these challenges, there is growing understanding of the need for safe, efficient and person-centred use of data, and SafeGarden has been working at a strategic level in the ICO regulatory sandbox and with a government panel on Trust Frameworks (Digital, Culture, Media & Sport). This is in a context of data sharing, inclusivity and privacy for data systems (such as the NHS) where *‘every time you open a door another door opens in front of you’*.

Looking to the future, SafeGarden will need greater capacity – staff, funding, support – to scale up its work and build on the progress, learning and networking that have already been achieved. The cross-pollination of ideas and solutions from other organisations in different sectors has been particularly valuable; being part of PHF’s Idea and Pioneers cohort is central to this.

“
Every time you open a door
another door opens in front
of you.
”



Photo credit: Paul Sandelands

Looking to the future

Pushing forwards

PHF is firmly committed to seizing the opportunities of our new ways of working, and not falling back into old habits. Both staff and trustees reflected on this during the review process. There is an ambition to use the experience of the last year as a catalyst to push forward, maintaining helpful funder behaviours and practices like greater flexibility and more streamlined processes.

Building closer relationships

As an organisation we are now thinking more critically and creatively about our aim to be more of a 'relational' funder, and how we can use what we have learnt over the past year to open ourselves up more to those outside our usual networks, build greater trust and sustain more open communications in our relationships.

We know that we need to make sure we are designing our approaches with applicants, funded organisations and partners to ensure that any innovations are properly tested and seek feedback to better understand whether we are achieving our aims. Within the coming year we intend to recommission the Center for Effective Philanthropy to run their Applicant and Grantee Perception Surveys to support our understanding of how the changes we have made are being experienced.

“

There is an ambition to use the experience of the last year as a catalyst to push forward, maintaining helpful funder behaviours and practices like greater flexibility and more streamlined processes.

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Looking to the future

Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion

The most critical piece of work for the coming year is developing and improving our approach to becoming an anti-racist funder, both in our grant-making and more broadly. As part of this process we must ensure we are centring the perspectives of those with lived experiences of racism, structural inequality and other forms of discrimination. This is going to be complex and sensitive work, and we approach it with humility, recognising the critical importance of opening ourselves up and committing to ambitious change.

We have funded some exceptional organisations and pioneers who are pushing forward the broader discourse about anti-racism, de-colonisation, equity and inclusion, particularly over the past year. We recognise that our main lever for social change is through the grants we make so we will also be looking to ensure that our funding is continuing to support this work in our key sectors of interest and in broader society.

To ensure we are applying an anti-racist lens to our UK grant-making, we will be monitoring the extent to which we are supporting work led by leaders with lived experience of racism and funding work on racial justice. We commit to being transparent about how we are doing and being open – inviting discussion, critique and feedback to ensure that our work is informed by others' experiences and in the hope we can contribute to broader shifts in the funding community.

Cross-cutting issues

During the coming year we will also be paying more attention to the themes identified in our strategy that relate to our social justice mission, particularly the climate emergency and ambition to strengthen civil society, and thinking about how we can contribute to these issues constructively using all the tools at our disposal.

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We have funded some exceptional organisations and pioneers who are pushing forward the broader discourse about anti-racism, de-colonisation, equity and inclusion, particularly over the past year.

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