

Our Funding 2013 to 2017

Reflections and Key Learning



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1. Introduction

Trust for London is an independent charitable foundation. We aim to tackle poverty and inequality in the capital and we do this by: funding voluntary and charity groups. During 2013 to 2017, we made grants totalling around £40 million (£8 million a year over the five years) and at any one time we are supporting up to 300 organisations; funding independent research; and providing knowledge and expertise on London's social issues to policymakers and journalists.

The Trust works on five year strategy cycles. This report covers the period from January 2013 to December 2017; within it we present some of the key facts about our grant making, as well as reflections on what we have learnt and achieved. Most of this data comes from the feedback we get from our grantees, through their end of grant reports, externally commissioned evaluations, and the many conversations we have with them over the lifetime of their grant.

From 2013 to 2017 our strategic aims were:

1. To tackle the root causes of poverty and inequality in London by funding voluntary and community sector organisations and others to undertake work within agreed priority areas. For the period 2013 to 2017, these were: Employment, Advice, Social Justice, Violence and Small Groups.
2. To increase understanding and insights into poverty and inequality in London and to explore potential solutions.
3. To increase the impact of the Trust's funded work by using our own knowledge, expertise and resources.

Each year, 40 per cent of the income from the Trust's endowment is distributed by the Church Commissioners, which forms the basis of the City Church Fund. The Trust has no control over this fund, therefore activity related to this funding is not included in this report.

2. The Context: 2013 to 2017

The period between 2013 and 2017 was one of significant economic, social and political change. Lives for those on low-incomes continued to be affected by increases in housing costs, changes to the labour market, and reductions to public services. These changes impacted heavily on the Trust's funding priorities.

The period saw significant cuts to the central Government grant to local authorities. After mitigation by local revenue raising, budgets have fallen by an average of 26 per cent. This led to both cuts in poverty-reducing services as well as attempts to raise extra revenue that had a negative effect on low-income Londoners by, for example, narrowing the scope of council tax exemptions.

Unemployment in London peaked at 7.6 per cent in 2013-14, dropping to 5.5 per cent in 2016-17. There was also a growth in self-employment, with London having the highest rate of all UK regions. Building on the success of the Living Wage campaign, In 2016, we saw the government introduce of a higher minimum wage for the over 25's, called the National Living Wage, with a target of reaching 60 per cent of median income by 2020.

There were several other notable external factors that impacted upon the work of the Trust:

- There was a growth of people working in the so called 'gig' economy, this prompted a review of modern day working practices by Matthew Taylor which concluded in 2017.
- The introduction of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) in April 2013, meant that significant areas of law were taken out of scope of Legal Aid including social welfare, family breakdown, employment and immigration (with a few exceptions). This led to an increase in 'litigants in person' (people representing themselves in court) as a result of reduced availability of affordable legal advice, as well as having a huge impact on the funding of the advice sector.
- The introduction of Employment Tribunal fees in July 2013 resulted in 79 per cent fewer cases being brought in the following quarter compared to the previous year. A successful legal challenge brought by Unison in 2017 led to the abolition of tribunal fees overnight.
- Welfare reform introduced in 2013 included the introduction of Universal Credit, personal independence payments to replace disability living allowance, a cap on the amount of benefits people can receive, as well as a host of other changes.

- Two major Acts on immigration in 2014 and 2016 intensified the ‘hostile environment’, created to deter migrants from coming to the UK and introducing punitive measures for those who were here undocumented. These saw a significant shift in policing by making it a criminal offence for landlords and employers to rent or employ an undocumented migrant, and the introduction of ‘deport first, appeal later’ policy.

Political instability was the defining feature of 2016 and 2017. During this period, we saw the referendum on membership of the European Union, a change of Prime Minister in 2016 and a snap election in 2017 resulting in a minority government, and a new Mayor of London in 2016.

3. How our funding was distributed

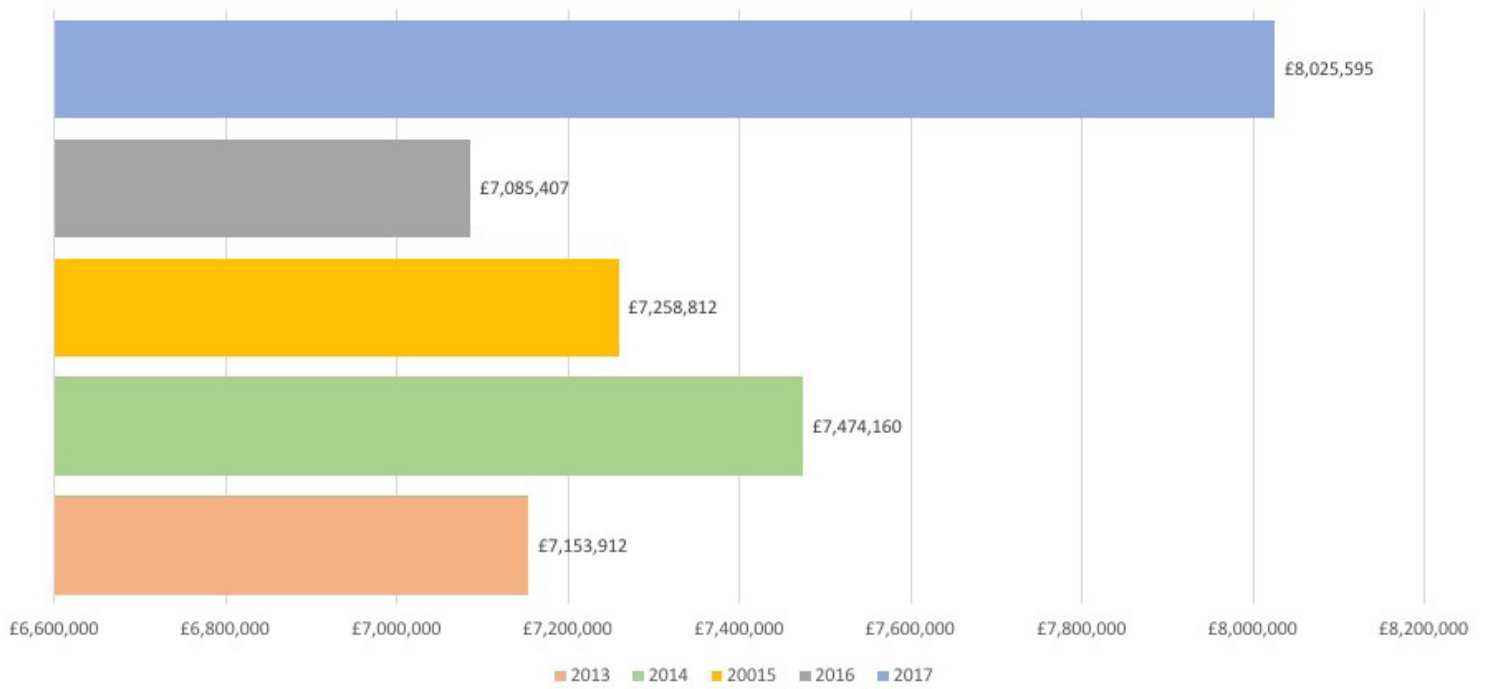
During 2013 to 2017 the Trust distributed £37 million to organisations tackling poverty and inequality in London. The average size of grant was £70,000. Due to increased returns on our endowment, our trustees approved an extra £1,000,000 in funding that was made available in 2017.

Over the period there was an increase in three year funding awarded to organisations, a strategic aim of the Trust. The overall number of applications for funding has declined over the five years, which can partly be explained by improved clarity in our guidelines about what the Trust will fund, which were implemented in 2016.

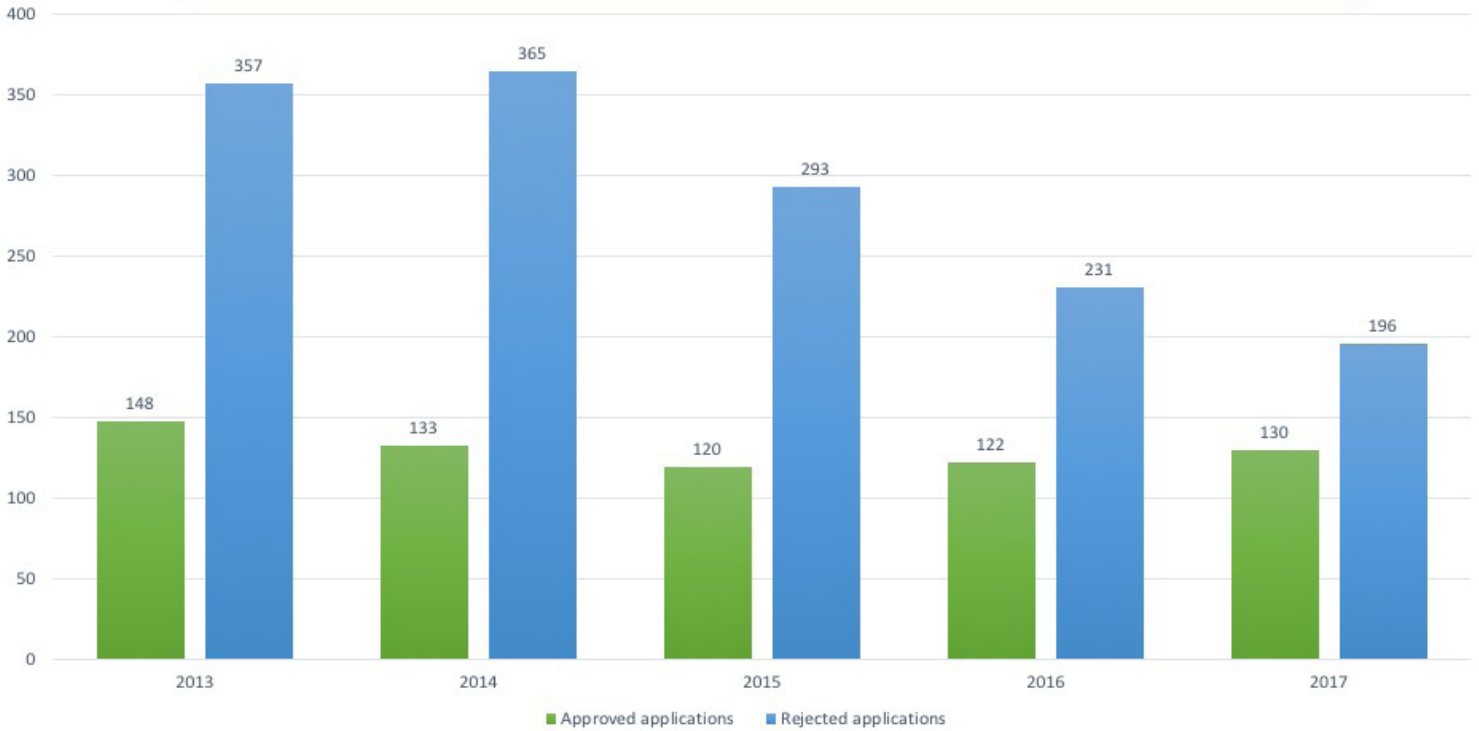
The overall success rate for applicants over the five years was approximately 31 per cent. Between 2013-2015, it was 28 per cent. However, the success rate between 2016-2017 increased to 37 per cent. Again, we believe this reflects clearer funding guidelines. In addition, 29 per cent of successful applications were from organisations that were not previously known to the Trust. This was only marginally below the target of 30 per cent.

Policy and research, campaigning work, and service delivery continued to be the main types of activity funded. Our funding for pure research was around eight per cent, and has been consistent for some time. However, a significant number of grants were a combination of policy, campaigning or service delivery with a small element of research.

Amount of Funding Distributed



Number of Applications Received and Approved



4. How the Trust's funding made a difference

The work that the Trust has funded has helped to improve the lives of thousands of low-income Londoners during the five years between 2013 and 2017. In this section, we share some of the highlights.

We funded employment support that was tailored around the needs of specific groups, helping to get people into work.

Across our work on employment the initiatives that were tailored to the needs of specific groups of people tended to have better results.

Outcomes from the Moving on Up Initiative, which focused on such as black men 16-24, included 271 obtaining employment; and softer outcomes such as participants increasing their confidence. It also highlighted that participants had low levels of social capital and engaging with employers was seen as a challenge.

Our grant to Beyond Youth, which supported care leavers to achieve sustained employment, had a 50 per cent success rate as a result of bespoke support and work placements.

We also funded work with workless members of the Charedi Community. It resulted in 311 people acquiring accredited training or other employment related skills. Of these, at least 62 have moved into paid employment. It also resulted in increased awareness amongst public sector bodies of the specific needs of this community.

Over 17 per cent of participants in our Step Up Initiative, which supports low-paid workers to progress in their careers, increased their hourly wage by 10 per cent or more.

The campaigns we funded helped to improve the pay, conditions and rights of low-paid workers.

The issue of unpaid internships rose in prominence towards the early part of the five year funding period. We funded Intern Aware to work in the issue, which resulted in the Labour Party, Liberal Democrats and Green parties all committing to a four-week limit on all unpaid internships.

We supported paid internships for disabled young people that were taken up by several west London boroughs. The West London Alliance created an internal post specifically to support these types of internships. Employers such as L'Oréal and GlaxoSmithKline also become advocates.

There was a six-fold increase in accredited Living Wage employers from 54 in 2014 to 283 in 2016. This meant that 87,000 employees received a pay rise as a result, a total wage impact estimated at £110m.

We funded research by the Centre for London that resulted in the report *London Rising: the case for a London minimum wage (2013)*, which made the recommendation for a London minimum wage and was widely endorsed, including by the Financial Times and Mayoral candidates.

The work of many of our grantees has helped decision makers to improve their policies, and service providers to improve their practice.

Many of the organisations we supported were able to positively influence the decisions made by central and local government. This includes work with Sustain to support eight local authorities to develop Food Poverty Action Plans, as well as Zacchaeus 2k's work to prevent or curtail increases in minimum Council Tax contributions in six London boroughs.

The evidence from research that we supported from Client Earth, Kings College London and the IPPR, helped inform the Mayor's approach to air quality in London and the commitment to extending the Ultra-Low Emission Zones.

Our funding influenced the decisions of businesses and trade unions. A grant to Quaker Social Action helped to sign up 35 per cent of funeral directors to the *Fair Funerals Pledge*.

Grantees that involved those directly experiencing poverty and inequality in policy work also had notable successes. The London Tenants Federation were able to secure significant changes to the legacy plans for the Olympic Park, whilst other organisations were vocal in media debates about the private rented sector.

Our funding has improved approaches to supporting victims and survivors of abuse or hate crime.

The Tackling Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) initiative, in which the Trust was a key partner, has contributed significantly to a growing national movement to end FGM in the UK. This was achieved through investing in community-led change, developing needed resources, sharing learning and providing a platform to advocate for a better response to ending FGM in the UK.

We participated in the Child Sexual Exploitation Funders Alliance, which helped to increase the understanding of issues around child sexual exploitation amongst voluntary sector partners.

Our funding for Standing Together Against Domestic Violence, helped develop an improved process to deal with applications to vary restraining orders in cases of domestic violence. The work also supported better inter-agency practice and accountability in domestic violence courts serving three boroughs.

Our grant to Eaves, provided accredited training to 56 professionals working with women exiting prostitution. Eaves was forced to close in 2015 but follow-on work by the Nia project, funded by the Trust, successfully challenged requirements for the disclosure of prostitution specific criminal records with a judicial review that ruled the such disclosures were disproportionate and a barrier to exiting prostitution and finding work. In addition, 38 vulnerable women have been supported to exit street prostitution through the provision of targeted counselling, mentoring and advice work supported by a grant to Street Talk.

Extensive consultation and development by IMKAAN led to the development of a functioning set of quality standards (IAQS) for work addressing harmful practices. The IAQS has become part of a wider national framework alongside standards from Women's Aid England and Rape Crisis England and Wales. The IAQS has also been used by MOPAC to inform the practice of the Harmful Practices Taskforce.

5. What we learnt

It's important to think about what change you are asking for, who you are seeking and who is doing the asking.

The most impactful policy work we funded resulted in very clear asks of policy makers. This often targeted civil servants, agencies and local government rather than just seeking broad change from central government.

The Trust has an ongoing commitment to involving those affected by issues of poverty and inequality (what is often termed 'lived experience') in advocacy work. But it is an approach that is hard to get right. It is much more time intensive for our grantees, and is harder to implement than policy change campaigns that rely on economic data, campaigning professionals or academic experts. Much of this advocacy work is part of a broader programme of work related to service delivery, advice or awareness raising. In practice, only a handful of the projects we funded that involved people with lived experience were successful in securing tangible changes in policy. More work needs to be done to open up traditionally top-down policy making processes, so this continues to be a priority for the Trust.

Alliances between different groups are often a requirement for success.

The experience of the Trust is that alliances between organisations from different sectors can be the catalyst for change. For example, bringing together community organisations, trade unions, and businesses had a transformative impact for some of our work around employment. This was because these were the stakeholders that had the resources needed to make a difference.

A number of our funded projects found that lack of cooperation from key agencies was a major barrier to achieving their aims and outcomes. This was particularly true with statutory agencies, where some of the issues blocking collaboration included projects no longer fitting policy priorities, central government changes, as well as complex and lengthy funding arrangements.

Engaging with employers was a difficult endeavour for many of our funded projects. This was evident with some of our work supporting people with mental health needs. Some projects sought to offer training, consultancy and support to employers to aid job retention for people with mental health needs. Many reported difficulties engaging with most larger employers. More encouragingly, they found that the NHS, local authorities and very large companies often had robust, formal procedures in place and offered support for employees with mental health needs. Small businesses tended to be more welcoming of external support, but this work was very resource intensive as the pressures of running a small business can make it very difficult for such employers to sustain their engagement.

The issues we are tackling require long term commitment. This is especially true for our policy work, where the work needs to continue beyond ‘big moments’ like the release of a report.

Some of the most effective campaigns were those supported over the long term. This enabled the continuity of relationships within communities and decision makers. In projects with a high turnover of staff during a campaign, it became a real impediment to its success.

The lead in time for campaigns work takes longer, particularly if the work is to galvanise support and alliances with new external partners. For example, campaigns that worked across multiple equality groups. In these instances, the continuity of relationship was crucial for success.

When our policy work took the form of research, the commitment of organisations to following through with the research agenda beyond the publication of a report was vital.

The same can be said of the big ‘set piece’ commissions that we funded or participated in. They can be influential while they are running, but struggle with follow up once the group disbands. This limits the longevity of the work.

Many of the organisations we fund struggle with collecting evidence about the difference they are making.

Many organisations struggle with data collection, which meant that they would find it difficult to understand and report the difference they are making. We found that this could cause real issues in partnership projects, where the data collection of different partners did not align, or partners were not collecting data for their part in a project or not responding to surveys.

Attributing change to policy and research projects can be difficult. There is not always an observable link between research or campaigning and the change that might have occurred. In these instances, most organisations active in that arena will be able to claim some contribution to the outcome.

Exploring innovative ideas is important, but it can be difficult to find projects to fund.

During 2013 to 2017, we narrowed the focus of our youth violence funding to concentrate on new and emerging models. However, this might have been too restrictive, resulting in missed opportunities to fund less-innovative projects that might have made a difference.

We should strive to put the people with lived experience of the issues we are tackling in control of the solution.

The emergence of lived experience as an important feature of successful projects is a notable finding from our work. For example, our work addressing harmful practices was most effective when focused on empowering those affected to act, for example, by supporting practicing communities to tackle FGM from within.

This can be challenging work. For example, it can be difficult for funded campaigns to find people affected by the issues who are willing to campaign or talk to the press. Often this reflects either fear of stigma or a concern about repercussions.

Our funding of 11 grants to address disability hate crime demonstrated the need for more effective interventions and the need to strengthen the voice of disabled people. This learning has resulted in us creating a new funding programme to support deaf and disabled people's organisations.

6. How we are responding

The Trust undertook an 18 month review of the work funded between 2013 to 2017, which culminated in the current five year funding strategy and seven new funding priorities. Within this strategy, there are three things we would like to highlight about our response.

First, we have built upon what we learnt about the importance of the voices of disabled people, we have partnered with the City Bridge Trust to launch Strengthening Voices, Realising Rights, a £1 million funding programme specifically for Deaf and Disabled Peoples Organisations.

Second, we are placing more emphasis on work that directly involves and empowers people with lived experience of poverty and inequality. This includes work to explore how 'experts by experience' can influence policy decisions, as well as efforts to increase the role of people with lived experience within the Trust's grant making and governance.

Finally, the Trust will be investing more in helping our grantees to understand the difference their work is making. This includes the appointment of a new Evaluation and Learning Manager, who will improve our data collection systems, as well as support our grantees with evaluation and learning.



Trust for London

Tackling poverty and inequality

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