

The Listening fund Scotland

Mid-point evaluation (July 2020)



The Listening Fund runs from March 2019-March 2021 and provides support to 11 youth organisations (partners) **to improve the way they listen to young people and respond what they hear**. By ‘listening’ we mean a process where young people are given specific opportunities to have a say in, and shape, youth provision, or to influence wider policies and practices.

Partners vary in terms of the type of services they offer and the young people they work with. This means they are using the Fund in very different ways. These ‘listening projects’ include:

- Employing a youth worker to lead on listening;
- Giving dedicated time to listen to young people whose voices are often not heard;
- Creating a youth board;
- Sharing young people’s opinions with other professionals and policy makers; and
- Using new ways of collecting feedback from young people

How is the Listening Fund being evaluated?

A number of methods (below) are being used to explore changes and learning in partner organisations. This is important to help understand how listening to young people can be ‘done well’. The key question the evaluation looks to answer is:

What is the impact of dedicated funder support on organisational listening practice?

The Listening Fund also felt it was important that young people’s ideas were included in the design of the fund itself. Young people were involved through workshops, a survey, focus groups and creation of a youth advisory group – the evaluation therefore also looks at how young people shaped the Fund.

This resource summarizes what we have learnt so far, using data from the partner self-assessment (baseline and mid-point) and telephone interviews with funders and young people.

Evaluation Activity	Project Year and Date
Partner self-assessment (baseline)*	Year 1 (April 2019)
Telephone interviews with funders and young people involved in the design of the Fund	Year 1 (March 2020)
Partner self-assessment (mid-point)	Year 1 (April 2020)
Young people’s listening feedback survey**	Year 2 (Winter 2020/2021)
In-depth organisational case studies with three partners	Year 2 (Winter 2020/2021)
Partner self-assessment (end-point)	Year 2 (April 2020)

*The self-assessment is a self-reporting survey for partners to record their listening activities and progress

**Delayed due to disruption to youth provision by the UK lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

What have we found out so far from partner feedback?



How have young people shaped the Fund and decisions of funders?

Young people's views and opinions on fund design were captured in various ways (see page 1). These were turned into six recommendations (outlined below). All of these recommendations were accepted in the design of the Fund except for one (recommendation 6 – due to GDPR constraints). Young people were also consulted on which applications be approved (but not on the amount of money each organisation received).

1	2	3	4	5	6
Age range	Partner size	Topic area	Grant size	Involving young people	Application writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fund should support a mix of ages from 5-25 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small and large organisations could apply but focus was on smaller organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No strong theme highlighted by young people so fund not too prescriptive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people felt there should be no limit - no upper or lower limit put in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants advised to include input from young people in their applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people felt they should have a direct role in writing applications