



End of Project Report to Big Lottery Fund (Awards for All)

Project Name:

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT

Unique Reference No: AFE/1/10439890

Prepared by: Christabell Amoakoh



YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

END OF PROJECT REPORT

Organisation	The Highlife Coventry Ltd
Unique reference number	AFE/1/10439890
Project Name	Youth Entrepreneurship and Business Skills Development
Project duration	6 Months
Dates covered by report	01/09/2012 to 31/03/2012

WHAT HAS THE FUNDING ENABLED US TO DO

The funding enabled us to support young people who are unemployed, hard to reach and mostly from disadvantaged backgrounds. We were able to constructively challenge these young people to develop on their hobbies and creative abilities to explore the possibilities of self-employment as a career option and to create action plans that have enabled them to focus on improving the quality of their lives.



Approved Target	15
Number of individuals engaged	24
Number of individuals supported	17
Number of businesses started	5

Number of training sessions held	22
Number of one to one meeting held	13
Total number of sessions	35

BREAKDOWN ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUALS SUPPORTED

Ethnicity	White	Black	Mixed	Asian	Other
	6	9	1	1	

Gender	Male	Female
	8	9

Age	Under 18	18 - 25	25-30	
	1	11	5	

Location Coventry

CV1	1
CV2	6
CV3	6
CV4	0
CV5	0
CV6	4
Warwickshire	0
Nuneaton and Bedworth	0
Other	0

Disability	Yes	No
	1	16

SECTOR BY DEMOGRAPHICS

No	Male	Female
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Entertainment	5	3	2
Food	1	0	1
Retail	1	0	1
Hair and Beauty	2	0	2
Professional services	6	3	3
Leisure	1	0	1
Sports	1	1	0
Other	0	0	0

REFERRAL SOURCES / ORGANISATIONS / PARTNERSHIPS CREATED

- 1 Job Centre Plus
- 2 Princes Trust
- 3 Community groups
- 4 Social media
- 5 Community outreach

2A. THE DIFFERENCE THE PROJECT HAS MADE TO THE PEOPLE THAT WERE INVOLVED

The funding received enabled us to support 17 young people who are unemployed and hard to reach, mostly from disadvantaged communities and backgrounds. We were able to constructively challenge these young people to develop and turn their interests and hobbies into creative business ventures on a smaller scale.

The volatility of the current job market conditions and increase in the numbers of the unemployed chasing fewer job opportunities makes it extremely difficult to access jobs successfully on the job market. The project participants were challenged and also encouraged to consider or explore self-employment opportunities as a viable alternative to seeking paid employment on the job market. In many cases, developing and acquiring entrepreneurship skills as an alternative to paid employment are an issue of survival.

The impact of the project activities on participants can be summarised as follows from our evaluation and project exit interviews:

- 85% participants reported that they have acquired business research skills and are able to use the skills to obtain information to assist their preparation to write a business plan.
- 12 participants reported that they are either in the process of preparing or have prepared a business plan based on their interests or hobbies and turning them into a viable business proposal for consideration.

- 87% participants reported that they have benefited from mentoring and confidence building through a 'business champion' and they are highly motivated and their confidence levels have increased.
- Nearly all the participants (95%) reported increase confidence to move from unemployment to some sort of employment either self-employment or seeking paid job.

The aim of the project was to equip individuals with the right skills in order for them to have better chances in life. The project monitored and evaluated individual's progress whilst on the programme using 5 main outcomes analysis:

Feedback on Skills Acquisition and Support

	Exceeded expectation	Satisfied	Need more support	Indifferent	Dissatisfied
How did you find the courses/sessions in relation to meeting your specific needs?	9	3	5		
How clearly was the information presented?	15	2			
Was the information covered the right amount?	17				
How did you rate the trainers?	17				
How would you rate the overall Programme?	14	3			

Feedback on Confidence Building Activities

	Exceeded expectation	Satisfied	Indifferent	More info required	Dissatisfied
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the support received to improve your Confidence	16	1			
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the support received to improve your Motivation	17				
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with support received to help you be in control of your life	14	2	1		
How will you rate your advisor in relation to supporting and understanding your specific needs	15	2			

2B. BENEFITS TO THE WIDER COMMUNITY

In order to determine how the project has benefited the wider community, we sought the views from a wide range of people through consultation and this was done by focus group discussions.

The following views were expressed through the focus group discussions:

- The project participants came from a wide range of backgrounds and ethnicity thus reflecting the different ethnicity composition of Coventry
- The project has in a small way contributed and strengthened social cohesion
- Judging by what was delivered against what was achieved, the project has benefited a range of people from different communities especially people from the African communities.
- Traditionally, the African communities are less inclined to consider self –employment and rather tend to concentrate on seeking paid jobs. However, the feedback received indicated that most of the participants have changed their views and are considering self-employment as a viable option to employability.

Evaluation and feedback we received confirmed that beneficiaries achieved over and above what they expected the programme to provide them. This has motivated, increased confidence and encouraged young people to take control of their own lives. They can now become champions in their communities to mentor and motivate other young people to improve the quality of their lives.

4 participants are now on our waiting list to receive training and support to start their own social enterprises to provide services that will benefit other people in the community.

PERFORMANCE AGAINST SPECIFIC OUTPUT RELATED TO PROJECT DELIVERY

The YEBSD Project started on 01/09/2012. A project coordinator was in place by 3rd September 2012 who began putting in place administrative systems to manage project delivery. By end of September 2013, we had completed our promotional activities such as creating social media pages and press releases. We began outreach programme in October 2012 through partner organisations such as Job Centre Plus and Community groups. In November 2012, we organised business awareness sessions to attract our target group. In December 2012, intensive support sessions begun. The sessions and support continued through until the end of the project on 28th March 2013 meeting project targets as planned.

WHAT BARRIERS HAVE BEEN OVERCOME TO ENABLE SOMEONE TO CONSIDER WORKING FOR THEMSELVES

We were faced with the following barriers throughout the project; some were expected whereas others were not perceived: **Language barriers, confidence issues, inability to raise start-up finance, psychological barriers such as long term embedded attitudes and mind-sets**, mainly developed from rejection and lack of knowledge. We were able to support beneficiaries to overcome these barriers through our confidence building activities and translation services provided. A barrier such as raising start-up capital was not perceived, however, we were able to signpost beneficiaries who required loans to Prince's Trust.

UNINTENTIONAL OUTCOMES

The project was aimed at achieving 5 main outcomes: Acquisition of Business Research Skills and Development of Business Plans, Skills Acquisition, Confidence building, Communication and Presentation Skills, Mentoring towards self-employment. There were also outcomes that were achieved but were not perceived such as: **Launch of 5 viable businesses, 3 individuals are now off state benefits and in full time self-employment, 3 Individuals who were previously unemployed are now in employment and 2 in full time education.**

SOCIAL IMPACT

The impact we have had on our beneficiaries is improvement of quality of lives. For some we have also been able to relieve unemployment through confidence building activities and support enabling them to use that motivation to find employment and to launch their own businesses. Some individuals are now off state benefits.

ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT

At The Highlife, we understand that the best way to be a sustainable social enterprise is to be an effective enterprise. Our organisation impact is the effect of our activities on members of the community who use our service. Over the past two years we have sustained a 20–25% annual rate of growth – a pattern we aim to maintain for the foreseeable future. Our activities are seen as a need in the community by groups and organisations such as The Chamber of Commerce, Prince's Trust, Job Centre Plus and other groups such as Refugee Centre and New Community Groups.

LESSONS LEARNT

From project monitoring activities, we have found gaps in our delivery such as providing a more flexible approach to training and mentoring. In future projects, we will use visual effects, online or electronic methods in our delivery rather than written hard copy materials as suggested by young people in our focus group.

For future bids, we will factor in our budget expenditure, costs towards initial start-up expenses for new businesses as we have found this to be one of the main barriers into self-employment. This will enable beneficiaries who for one reason or another are unable to secure a loan.

BUDGET ANALYSIS

	Budgeted	Actual	Variance
	Expenditure	Cost	
	£	£	£
Project Co-ordinator	1,620.00	1615.87	- 4.13
Trainers' fees	5,760.00	5735	- 25.00
Training Materials	600.00	598	- 2.00
Participants Travel Expenses	600.00	600	-
Participants Refreshments	225.00	224.36	- 0.64
Total Costs	8,805.00		- 31.77

CONCLUSION

Overall, the project was successfully delivered on time and within budget. We believe that the project has been a huge success. Pictures and information can be found on our website: <http://www.thehighlife.org/yebds.html>

The Highlife Coventry Ltd
Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England and Wales: Number: 07415399
Reg. office: 18 Hertford Street, Coventry, CV1 1LF