

Pathways **2** Economic Opportunities



**Reflections and Learnings from the Organisational
Development Programme of Support**

PHASE 3 | FINAL REPORT



Background to Pathways 2 Economic Opportunities (P2E)

JPMorganChase has supported LCF since 2021 on a £2 million Pathways to Economic Opportunities Programme (P2E), delivered with Action for Race Equality and The Ubele Initiative, addressing racial and economic inequalities in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in London.

The initiative aimed to strengthen Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic-led organisations providing employment, enterprise, and financial health services (EEFH), creating opportunities post-Covid-19, and removing barriers to economic opportunity.

The fund aimed to demonstrate the importance of community and infrastructure organisations in addressing inequalities, creating a platform for sharing and developing skills and expertise in this space.

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PROGRAMME PHASES

Phase 1

Six organisations received £11,500 over six months from October to December 2021 for stabilisation and engagement support and to participate in the co-design of longer-term funding and support. This phase also included a mapping survey exercise to inform the design and place-based approach.

Findings from this Phase suggested a package of support that accommodated different capacity levels and learning styles, including workshops, 1-1 specialist support and peer learning.

The workshops need to be intermediate to higher level, practical and solution focused. The 1-1 specialist support could come from ARE's pool of consultants or those who organisations had existing relationships with.

It was recommended that there were specialists in relation to geography or topics, people with lived experiences or cultural competency or simply because of being able to speak the relevant community languages.

There was additionally a strong preference for peer learning and a space to reflect and learn from one another.

[READ THE PHASE 1 REPORT](#)

Phase 2

From early 2022, 19 registered charities, voluntary or community groups received grants between £50,000 to £100,000 over two years for project costs and/or core costs, alongside organisational development support.

Of the 19, this included the six organisations from Phase 1. Phase 2 targeted eight boroughs in London, which were identified in the co-design phase. These were Barking and Dagenham, Brent, Croydon, Hounslow, Enfield, Newham, Tower Hamlets, and Waltham Forest.

Phase 3

Phase 3 was the implementation of the organisational development programme to the 19 funded organisations, managed by ARE in partnership with Ubele Initiative.

The programme of support was delivered between September 2022 – May 2024 and included:

- 1:1 organisational development consultancy support;
- Peer learning; and
- Training on topics relevant to the cohort of organisations.

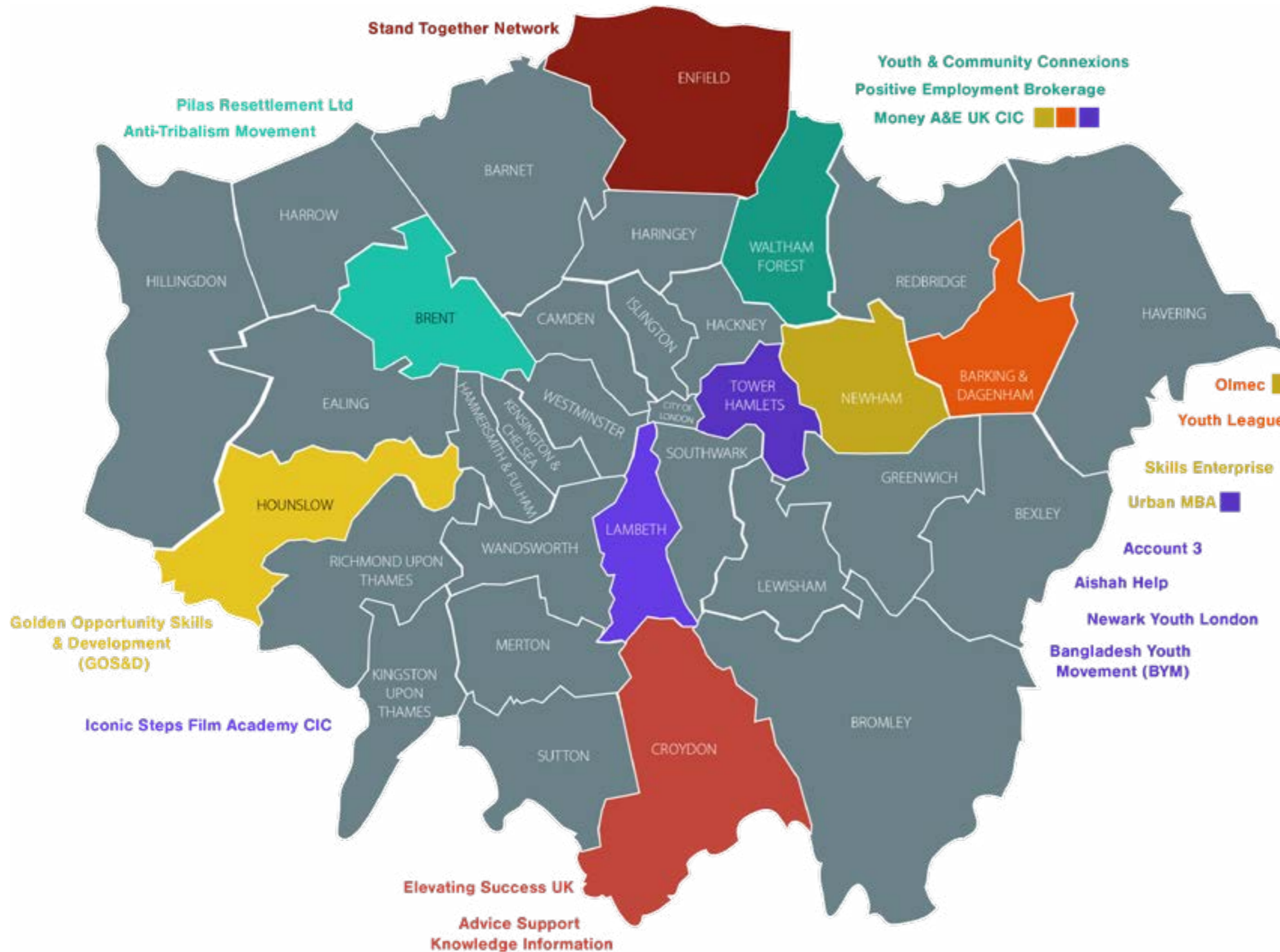
The package of support that was provided, as well as some of the workshop topics, were informed from Phase 1.

This report covers Phase 3 of the programme, specifically the organisational development component, sharing our learnings and recommendations from the past two years of delivery. It focuses on capturing the journey and value of the programme.

Our partner, Ubele Initiative, assess the short-term impact of the programme in their monitoring and evaluation report.

THE PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

A list of the 19 partner organisations and their location in London are shown on the map below.



PHASE 3

Summary of Delivery

Between 2022 - 2024, nineteen organisations received organisation and leadership support through:

- 16 workshops and peer-learning sessions
- 500 hours of 1-2-1 consultancy
- Access to resources
- Networking
- Sector news and information

In the first year, the attendance rate for workshops was an average of 13 out of the 19 organisations.

In the second year, there was a significant drop with an average of nine organisations in attendance. There were six organisations who attended fewer than 50% of the workshops.

Using feedback data from the workshops, 90% of participants rated the workshop sessions very positively: extremely useful or very useful.

Sixty-two per cent found the help and assistance received from their consultant extremely useful, and 25% very useful.¹

¹ See Ubele full report

Workshops

The workshops covered a variety of topics:

- Inspire Leadership Training: In partnership with JPMorganChase, topics included: Bias and Inclusion, Organisational Swot Analysis, Leadership Characteristics, Situational Leadership and Receiving Effective Feedback.
- Building Resilient Teams: Strategies for identifying and preventing burnout
- Writing Better Bids and Diversifying Income
- Evaluating and Measuring Impact
- Budgeting and Finance
- Communications and Social Media
- Budget Forecasting and Cashflow
- Microsoft 365 Office: Utilising Teams, Sharepoint and other Apps
- Sustainability Beyond the Programme

Peer learning sessions



PEER LEARNING SESSIONS

provided a platform for skill-sharing, networking and problem solving.

Various facilitation methods were used including **Action Learning Sets**, **World Cafes**, and **Lightening Decision Jams**. Topics covered included:

- Dealing with the Cost-of-Living Crisis
- Developing an Elevator Pitch to a Funder, Media, Parliamentarian
- Managing Change and Growth within an Organisation
- Building Long-term Partnerships
- Digitising Accredited Courses and Training as Alternative Sources of Income
- Methods for Measuring Impact

The first year saw an average attendance rate of 70% dropping to 51% in the second year. This decline was partially due to workshop fatigue and increased engagement with the 1-1 consultancy support.

Positive feedback and an opportunity for networking and skill-sharing led to an increased emphasis on face-to-face peer learning sessions in the second year.

ARE is an agile organisation and used the learning to modify our approach to using Action Learning Sets and modified the delivery style to include World Cafes and Lightening Decision Jams, enhancing skill-sharing opportunities.

“Engagement with the [P2E] network has enriched our understanding of diverse evaluation systems and best practices adopted by peer organisations. This knowledge exchange has enhanced our operational effectiveness and credibility.”

P2E Partner Organisation

“Networking at events such as the World Cafe has led to collaborations outside of the programme. It would be great for future programmes to enable and build in more opportunities for this.”

P2E Partner Organisation

Partner organisations were encouraged to facilitate discussions as part of the personal development and leadership growth skills.

You Press facilitated the Lightening Decision Jam workshop which focused on monitoring and evaluation, a topic collectively agreed on by partner organisations involved in the workshop. Three partner organisations facilitated the table discussions at the World Cafe.

CONSULTANCY SUPPORT

Each partner organisation had an allocation of a fully funded specialist 1-1 consultancy support from ARE's pool of consultants or a vetted consultant the organisation had previously worked with. This was an approach that increased inclusivity and diversity through access to local or community-based experts.

“[Our consultant] understands the issues, what it is for someone who works with the BME community. She understands the marginalisation that the groups have. It's very easy for her to understand the issues people are facing and the reasons for our projects and our work. [We don't] have to always explain to someone why we have to do this project.”

P2E Partner Organisation

Consultancy Allocation

Consultants typically worked with each organisation for an average of four days. In some cases, organisations did not fully utilise the offer of support for a range of reasons.

This included capacity and time as once they started working with consultants, it introduced additional work. Some organisations were also receiving consultancy support from other funders or were not ready to take up support.

Listening to these organisations, ARE used its discretion to redistribute their allocation, resulting in some organisations receiving up to five to six days of support.

Focus areas

The consultancy support focused on developing or refining business strategies and exploring different income streams. Other areas included:

- Policy and governance reviews and updates
- 1-1 leadership and management mentoring
- Social media, communications and website updating
- Developing organisational and fundraising strategies with a focus on unrestricted funds
- Setting up course accreditation
- Monitoring evaluation and impact reporting
- Advising on external web support and tech packages

OUR APPROACH

“The P2E programme has been a transformative experience for our organisation. Through targeted workshops, insightful assessments, and tailored coaching, the program has helped us identify and capitalise on our strengths while addressing areas for improvement.

The impact on our organisation has been profound, fostering a shared sense of purpose, improved communication, and enhanced leadership capabilities.”

P2E Partner Organisation

Our working ethos from the offset was to ensure that the organisational development programme was **collaborative** and **reflective**, with partner organisations leading the way. We also incorporated learning from the co-design phase, organisational baseline assessments, and post-workshop surveys.

Phase 1 indicated that it would be beneficial, based on previous experiences, to have a pre-assessment to determine the sort of development support that organisations would find most beneficial.

As government, charitable trusts and foundations become increasingly interested in offering various capacity building interventions to increase the sustainability and infrastructure of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic-led organisations, the P2E programme was designed to be unique in its approach to being culturally competent, reflective and tailored to each organisation's financial and infrastructure needs.

We centered our approach around:

- **Diverse learning styles** - ARE catered to the diversity of organisations in terms of size, capacity and specialism, as well as individual learning styles in the delivery of support
- **Cultural competence** – ARE understands and appreciates interacting effectively with individuals across cultural backgrounds. ARE consultants and trainers have personal insights, experiences and knowledge of diverse cultural practices, communication styles, world views, historical contexts
- **Tailored support** - ARE recognised that a one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective in achieving our intended outcomes, in terms of building organisational infrastructure, sustainability and leadership for Black and Minority Ethnic-led EEFH organisations
- **Flexibility, reflection and collaboration** Feedback from partners influenced workshops and 1-1 consultancy support. P2E partners shared unique challenges related to capacity, access to funding, staffing, well-being and sustainability, learning from others who had overcome similar issues.

“The Pathways model underscores the importance of continuous feedback and adaptation ... in addressing any challenges and improving outcomes for the participants.”

P2E Partner Organisation

A bespoke assessment tool, the Capacity Assessment Schedule (CAS) was used to identify key priority areas of organisational development needs.

The CAS is a derivative of the McKinsey Organisational Assessment Tool (OCAT), developed by FW Business Ltd over the last 10 years, working with a range of voluntary and community organisations to refine the tool and the process.

It is intended as a self-assessment tool for organisations to identify gaps that required support for their organisation, and to measure progress against initial or target benchmarks.

The CAS covers five broad categories deemed to be important considerations for organisational development activities:

- Governance and Leadership
- Operations and Organisational Management
- Human Resources
- Procedure, Systems and Infrastructure
- Programme Design, Content and Delivery

Organisations were asked to assess themselves on a scale of 1-3, with 1 being 'Inadequate Capacity', 2 being 'Basic Capacity' and 3 being 'Above Average Capacity'.

Findings comparing the baseline score and the reassessment score at the end of the two years showed that organisations improved overall on their baseline score by 21%, with a major impact on Human Resources (36%).²

“The baseline assessment, followed by development plan, one to one consultancy is an excellent model. I have cited how the baseline assessment has had a direct impact on our strategic approach to reviewing and updating our policy and procedure portfolio.”

P2E Partner Organisation

Participatory organisational development assessments can be an effective way of looking at organisational development strengths, weaknesses, successes, and areas for improvement. These assessments highlighted common priorities and knowledge gaps, shaping out our workshop series.

Workshops were designed to balance intermediate and advanced levels, acknowledging each organisation's stage in their learning journey.

As the programme progressed, we adjusted based on workshop feedback, 1-1 check-ins and consultant feedback, reflecting the importance of peer learning and networking. Year two workshops incorporated more peer-learning and networking sessions.

Our workshops used various facilitation styles and group activities to accommodate different learning styles.

² See Ubele full report for findings

REFLECTIONS AND LEARNINGS

Co-design approach

“Typically, we often feel compelled to participate in programmes that do not deliver the tangible outcomes that civil society organisations seek in terms of building sector capacity. Following the pilot project, we witnessed the real value of collaborating with progressive second-tier organisations such as ARE and UBELE.

These organisations fully understand what is needed to effectively and practically support the capacity needs of small, often under-resourced, and under-supported civil society organisations. We strongly recommend adopting a similar approach in future funding opportunities.”

P2E partner organisation

A co-design approach with flexibility, transparent communication and meaningful engagement has been crucial for the development of small Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic-led organisations.

This method realigned power between funders and grantees, allowing organisations to engage with and guide funders with what works in organisational development and funder plus models.

A collaborative approach ensures the support is dynamic, responsive and aligned with each organisation’s unique needs, fostering a more inclusive and impactful social sector.

Using this approach meant our workshop plan was adaptable, allowing for learning

and adjustment based on feedback. This agile and flexible approach resulted in changing schedules and topics, impacting on managing the logistics and diaries – a complex operation when partner organisations have busy diaries and capacity to attend to consider.

Building Relationships

“This is the first time I have spoken to a consultant who suits my needs and understands the disruption we are creating in the market.”

P2E partner organisation

Building relationships with organisations has been key to linking them with appropriate consultants and peer organisations.

ARE did this through office visits, 1-1 meetings and check-ins with organisations to gain greater understanding of how each organisation functions and to gather feedback on their consultancy journey. Initially, 1-1 consultancy support had low uptake due to time constraints.

By identifying key areas needing attention, we tailored support to build long-term sustainability. Sharing success stories and encouraging initial meetings with consultants helped increase engagement.

Many organisations, such as Youth League UK, faced external challenges such as the cost-of-living crisis on their services, affecting capacity to engage.

Leaders like John Wainaina from Youth League shared there is a fine balance to be struck working on the frontline, trying to lead a team, juggling responsibilities to funders and trusts, and how that relationship could be improved to have even more of an impact.

“We have gained valuable insights and best practices on fostering a culture of shared learning, resources and collaboration among BME community groups. We are in a stronger position to collaborate on new community-led solutions that address employment and wider needs of BME groups in the borough.”

P2E Partner Organisation

In other cases, peer learning was prioritised over 1-1 consultancy. For instance, ASKI sought to learn from other Black-led organisations about setting up a community asset and peer learning was more beneficial.

Having built relationships with P2E organisations, as well as through other ARE programmes, we were able to link organisations with one another, matching skillsets and expertise with need.

Urban MBA reflected on the support enhancing their ability to form and manage partnerships, collaborating with organisations such as Carb Eats, Black Equity Organisation, and Media Trust.

Building relationships has also included building a relationship and trust with funders. ARE is independent and utilised the role to create a platform for two-way engagement.

Responsive

“Initially, balancing the demands of our day-to-day operations with the time required for organisational development activities was challenging, but we adapted our schedules to accommodate these valuable sessions.”

P2E Partner Organisation

Year two saw a drop in workshop attendance (from 70% average attendance to 51%) as organisations prioritised 1-1 consultancy support amid their regular workload and external pressures. Many were also receiving similar support from other funders.

Organisations who had received project funding had an additional pressure to meet key target measures and outcomes for each quarterly reporting period, which had an effect on engagement levels.

Not to mention the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on increased service needs and staff capacity. Smaller organisations felt stretched at times to attend the workshops, and some felt overburdened with the amount of workshops.

There was additionally pressure for organisations to attend workshops as it was linked to grant funding. ARE amended and adapted the workshop programme plan as a responsive and responsible agent.

“It is open-ended with you being able to raise what is important to us and quickly you are able to pick what I am struggling with. Also, for finance and reserves, which I was struggling with, you were able to quickly pick, reflect and apply relevant knowledge to us.”

P2E partner feedback to consultant support

Despite challenges, those engaging with consultants experienced transformational benefits, refining policies, strategies and roles. However, some noted the additional workload from consultancy and resistance to change within their teams from higher management.

Key Learnings and Impact of Organisational Development

“The funding allowed us to deliver support to clients who were really in need, but then the organisational development helped to support us as an organisation that needed some really important strategies, advice and guidance. Overall, this was exceptional because we have been working with various contracts for many years, and we have never experienced this level of in-depth support.”

P2E partner organisation

Our feedback highlights the need for a flexible, equitable approach from funders, recognising that progress varies.

Partnerships and capacity building foster growth, but small Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic-led organisations face barriers like autonomy loss, trust issues and inadequate structures (e.g., relevant organisational policies). Limited resources, such as scarcity of human and financial resources, also hinders participation in training workshops and implementing learnings in practice.

The cost-of-living crisis put a major strain on many organisations as their service delivery increased. The organisational development support enabled organisations to secure additional funds, recruit additional staff members, and reinforce organisational commitment to proactive planning, financial management, and strategic partnerships to effectively address community needs.

CASE STUDY

Secured additional funding to expand services

YOU PRESS

P2E grant amount
£62,002

Amount raised during P2E programme
£4,896

You Press received a high demand of applicants for their ASPIRE program, five times their initial target number. Securing additional funding would allow them to meet this demand and to expand their support to more young creatives.

Their 1-1 consultancy support was instrumental in securing their first social investment funding, critical for their capacity building efforts. This investment would allow them to expand their services and reach more beneficiaries, achieving greater impact in their community.

Objectives agreed with consultant

- Raising core funding, including social investments
- Improving financial management systems as they diversify trading activities and projects
- Contract reviews and improvements that include service contract updates for their creative agency

Outcomes achieved

- Increased strategic knowledge including project scoping, project costings, resource allocation
- Improved grant application completion and success
- Policy development and systems
- Exposure to value-add collaborative partners
- Financial forecasting

The below table shows how much more additional funding organisations have accessed since participating in the programme, ranging from 8% to 615% additional funds. Where it states 'N/A', the organisation had said they had raised additional funds but had not specified the amount. Those that state '0' did not raise any additional funds during the length of the programme.

GRANT APPLICATION NAME	GRANT AMOUNT AWARDED	AMOUNT RAISED	% OF GRANT RAISED
Account 3	£100,000	£615,000	615%
Advice Support Knowledge Information	£53,853	£55,000	102%
Aishah Help	£61,288	£191,150	312%
Anti-Tribalism Movement	£100,000	0	0%
Elevating Success UK	£59,392	N/A	N/A
Golden Opportunity Skills & Development (GOSAD)	£100,000	£27,000	27%
Newark Youth London	£99,822	£8,000	8%
Olmec	£69,150	£29,500	43%
Plias Resettlement Ltd	£86,726	£50,000	58%
Positive Employment Job Brokerage	£65,459	0	0%
Skills Enterprise	£86,235	£31,600	37%
Stand Together Network	£50,500	£20,000	40%
The Bangladesh Youth Movement (BYM)	£63,764	£60,000	94%
Urban MBA	£99,135	N/A	N/A
YouPress	£62,002	£4,896	8%
Youth and Community Connexions	£76,816	0	0%
Youth League UK (U	£99,759	£188,830	189%

Overall, the organisational development model has been positively received, achieving the following outcomes.

Strategic Alignment

The model has supported organisations to improve internal processes and strategic planning, aligning goals with the organisational mission.

Securing Funding and Income Diversification

The 1-1 consultancy support has increased leader confidence to explore new areas of development, sustainability and growth, resulting in new income sources such as contract and private funding. One organisation had secured their first social investment funding which will allow them to expand their services and have a greater impact on the community.

Leadership and Team Dynamics

Organisations who focused their 1-1 support on leadership and team dynamics gained more clarity on structure and roles, fostering a cohesive and motivated work environment. It has increased team confidence and brought in new energy.

Increased Knowledge and Confidence

Practical workshops on MS 365 and finance management equipped staff with new skills and helped them use programs more effectively. Staff realised they had not been using programmes to their full advantage and learned ways of working to reduce their workload.

Collaboration and Solidarity

Workshops and peer learning sessions reassured leaders they weren't alone with challenges, such as burn out. They were able to discuss and troubleshoot relevant topics together, as well as build new collaborative opportunities and knowledge sharing with each other.

CASE STUDY

Improved overall governance, leadership and revised board structure

ACCOUNT 3

P2E grant amount
£100,000

Amount raised during P2E programme
£615,000

Account 3 leveraged the largest amount of grants, from five different funders, which will cover staff and project costs for the next three years.

Their 1-1 consultancy support focused on building capacity of the board and leadership, which they commented has 'built confidence and resilience for the whole team'. It has also increased clarity around financial processes.

Objectives agreed with consultant

- Review of the board structure
- Roles and responsibilities [clarity & compliance]
- Skills gap and time commitment
- Closing the gaps and how?
- General leadership training for all

Outcomes achieved

- Improved board structure by increasing governance knowledge and expectations
- Developed the role description of leadership teams
- Improved knowledge of leadership team via one-to-one training and whole governance training.
- Increased awareness of steps to take to progress from sustain to thriving organisation

CULTURAL COMPETENCY

"I feel like there is somebody who really knows and can guide us and a person who understands our organisation's ethos and why we do what we do for our growth and to help our users."

P2E Partner Organisation

ARE works with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic consultants who understand the sector and specific services P2E organisations provide.

In addition ARE introduced the opportunity for organisations to utilise existing experts they may be engaged with. This allowed experts from a local, cultural, religious etc. context to add value to work they may have started, therefore reducing the frustration of "having to explain things all over again to a new consultant". This cultural and political understanding was crucial for delivering relevant support.

"I felt very comfortable because of the cultural lens. I was able to openly talk to you."

P2E Partner Organisation

This feedback underscores the value of culturally competent consultancy in addressing the unique needs of Black, Asian and Minority ethnic-led organisations.

CASE STUDY

Secured additional funding to expand services

Urban MBA

The P2E model of grant funding and organisational development support allowed Urban MBA to invest in a new physical infrastructure hub whilst developing capacity to manage it effectively.

They developed stronger governance structures, leading to the creation of a youth board with alumni members. They expanded their programmes and improved monitoring and evaluation processes, allowing better tracking and demonstration of their impact.

Through the consultancy support, they strengthened fundraising capabilities by exploring diverse funding streams for long term sustainability.

They said that the *“holistic approach has been crucial in our transformation from a small local initiative to a significant player in East London’s entrepreneurial ecosystem, setting a strong foundation for continued growth and impact.”*

Objectives agreed with consultant

- Revenue generation through:
 - Trusts and Foundations
 - Corporate Investment
 - Monetising premises

Outcomes achieved

- Improved knowledge of public sector tender opportunities
- Completion of LBH tender
- Improved strategy to targeted fundraising

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

For Funders

1. Continue to invest

In addition to grants, funders should continue to invest in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic-led organisations in a co-ordinated way. This includes pro-bono technical support and designated funds to build and strengthen the skills and infrastructure of the sector, with an aim to bring these organisations on par with mainstream organisations.

2. Relationship-Centred Work

Funders should centre their work around meaningful relationships with organisations, fostering trust, open communication and collaboration. Continue to support organisational development work and communicate with other funders also offering organisational development to avoid overlap.

3. Tailored Offers of Support

Support should be tailored - learning and listening to the organisation’s unique context and needs. This should be both in terms of financial and non-financial support

4. Facilitate Networking

Funders can play a role in connecting leaders from different organisations, including through intermediary organisations, creating spaces for sharing best practices and knowledge.

5. Hands-on Support

Investing in tangible, hands-on support, such as training sessions and leadership coaching delivered by external experts, can significantly contribute to an organisation’s development and sustainability.

6. Visible Points of Contact

Having a visible point of contact within the funding organisation enhances trust, accessibility and communication.

7. Initiate a Consultancy Banking System

Funders should hold a consultancy support allocation for an additional 6 months beyond the grant to allow organisations and leaders who were not able to take up support in the allocated time due to capacity or other priorities.

8. Flexibility in Consultancy

Funders should offer flexibility in consultancy style and scope, recognizing the varying and fluctuating requirements of different organisations driven by a fast moving socio-economic and political climate.

9. Cultural Competency

Acknowledge and prioritise the importance of cultural competency and a more equitable approach to support being offered, including consultants and trainers with relevant lived experience. This includes allowing for consultants or experts selected by the organisation based on cultural or geopolitical knowledge, to be considered and vetted.

10. Utilise independent intermediaries with situated knowledge

Agencies such as Action for Race Equality are crucial to facilitating trust and dialogue to work towards meaningful change for a more equitable funding environment.

Led by and for organisations/Black, Asian & Minority led sector

1. Strategic Direction

Value the importance of reflecting on and building organisational strategic direction to avoid mission drift.

2. Collaboration

Build on partnerships with organisations working in the same sector and leverage opportunities for skill sharing and joint funding.

3. Staff development

Develop leadership across the organisation, delegating responsibilities equally. Investing in the entire organisation, by ensuring everyone understands the organisational strategy and future plans, helps with long-term sustainability overall.

4. Support and Learning

Take advantage of available support aimed at building organisational sustainability and develop mechanisms to share learnings with colleagues.

5. Capture your stories

Take advantage of platforms to share your insights, learning and successes to funders, beyond the official reporting – enable funders to include your lenses when developing strategies.

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ACTION FOR RACE
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