

Genesis Project

Project Review and Closure Report

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Background

Incontrol-able CIC is a developing Disabled Peoples User-Led Organisation who applied to the Office for Disability Issues to access their Facilitation Fund to run a pilot project that would assist us in becoming sustainable. The aim of the pilot was to provide disabled people in Hartlepool with the opportunity to access appropriate training that would enable them to have a 'voice' on local issues that were important to them.

The funding was used to recruit a part-time Project Manager on a nine month contract to facilitate engagement in the project and to arrange appropriate training and awareness sessions. As it was a new and innovative project we decided to call it '*Genesis*'.

1.2 Reason for Closing the project

The project began in August 2012 and ended within the agreed timescale on 26th April 2013.

1.3 Highlights and Innovations

The highlight of the project was the commitment and determination of the volunteers who participated in the training and their willingness to become involved in our organisation. The culture of the organisation is openness and being person-centred in everything we do and this helped create an environment where people came together and supported each other. Whether this can be described as being innovative is open to question, but without doubt by working in a person-centred way and by making it fun for the participants definitely led to the successful outcomes for the people involved in the project.

Another positive point was the closer working relationship formed with Darlington Association on Disability (DAD) and their 'Stronger Voices Strong Support' project which has resulted in the sharing of knowledge and skills of disabled people.

Finally, Incontrol-able CIC were presented with two awards as a result of the Genesis Project, winning the 'Community Learning Group 2012' and the 'Doreen Stonehouse Outstanding Learning Award 2013' presented by Skillshare NE. One of our Directors and two members of the project were involved in training which included the Certificate in Developing Skills to Manage Community & Voluntary Organisations, through the National Open College Network Level 3.



NOCN Outstanding Learning Award 2013

1.4 Summary of Recommendations

1. Stakeholders agree that the project can be deemed closed.
2. Good Practice achieved by the project is shared with Stakeholders, Commissioners, like-minded organisations and agencies
3. Build positive working relationships with local Commissioners.
4. Funders consider independent user-led organisations as appropriate hosts for future project work.
5. DPULO's to be resourceful in the use of funding.
6. Simplify the application process for the Facilitation Fund.
7. Allow use of the Facilitation Fund for core costs.
8. Build positive working relationships with ODI Ambassadors.
9. Participants in projects not to be impairment specific.
10. Maintain involvement with people who took part in the project.
11. Have a person-centred culture within the organisation.
12. Only access training that is appropriate to the organisation and the needs of the staff/members.
13. Build positive working relationships with like minded local organisations.

2. Project Performance

1. Engage with local disabled people in the community and for them to become involved in our organisation.
2. Increase the membership of our organisation and involve members in our new management structure.
3. Provide appropriate training that empowers disabled people to have a voice in their community.

All three planned project performances were achieved within budget and agreed timescales.

2.1 Performance against Objectives

Objective 1

- I. A personalised approach was achieved by engaging with people at a level and pace that was appropriate to their individual needs.
- II. Following the initial contact stage, meetings were arranged with individuals to ensure that people had an understanding of the project and how the Project Manager would work with them to be fully involved.
- III. The Project Manager provided a flexible environment that was tailored around the individual and allowed for unexpected events, or for times when the individual chose not to engage, but at all times with the expectation that the involvement would resume. Also, at the initial stages participants completed Membership Forms, Impact Assessments and Consent Forms. (Appendices 1,2,3).
- IV. Each session attended by participants built on the learning from the previous session. This is not as formal as it sounds as people engaged with each other and provided peer support.

Objective 2

- I. Current Directors attended forums with participants to inform them about the ethos of our organisation and the long term aims and objectives within the project.
- II. Participants received Governance Awareness Training from a local accredited organisation – SkillShare NE Ltd.
- III. Participants completed organisational membership forms.

Objective 3

- I. Provided '*in-house*' awareness sessions when appropriate.
- II. Arranged delivery of training sessions with local external organisations.
- III. Participants completed '*impact assessments*' to evidence their learning journey. These assessments assisted in identifying participants knowledge base, prior to and after each session on relevant subjects. The data in the sample evidenced in this report clearly shows that participants had a greater knowledge and understanding of the subject matter following the awareness sessions. The document template and data evidence examples can be found at the end of this report.
- IV. Directors spent time with participants to ensure that they understood the link between the training and their involvement within the project.

2.2 Performance against Outcomes

1. The target outcome of engaging with disabled people to participate in the Genesis Project was achieved through appropriate training and levels of support.
2. This outcome was achieved as all participants became members of the organisation and two people from the project were invited to become Directors.

- a. It was always the aim to invite two participants from the Genesis Project to become Directors of Incontrol-able CIC, if the current Directors felt that people had the potential and commitment for the role. We purposely did not disclose our aim until the end of the project to ensure that participants did not feel unduly pressured into possibly becoming Directors.
 - b. Throughout the term of the project, current Directors constantly engaged with participants to attempt to ascertain individual's possible willingness to undertake such a role, taking into considering their previous/current employment skills, if any, their personal attributes and for us to be clear in our minds that they would be an attribute to our organisation. We did not want the offer of a 'directorship' to be *tokenistic* in any way.
 - c. We were delighted that the two people who accepted the offer met all the criteria we were hoping for as they fully embraced the ethos of the project, fully engaged in all of the awareness sessions and supported their peers without prompts. The participants also impressed local trainers and local commissioners/stakeholders with their commitment and knowledge base.
3. This outcome was achieved through the delivery of five separate training/awareness sessions to members and informal meetings with current Directors.

2.3 Performance against Outputs

1. From our initial schedule submitted to the Facilitation Fund we had a target of engaging with 12 people. At its peak the Genesis project had 15 people involved and at the end of the project there remained a core group of nine people. This figure was achieved by being person-centred in our approach and engaging at levels that were appropriate to individual needs. It was difficult to keep the core group together as they did not keep in touch outside of arranged meetings and this is something we need to be aware of in our future work.

2. We requested that participants completed membership forms when they initially became involved in the project as we wanted them to feel part of our organisation from the onset. By delivering awareness sessions on governance people had a greater understanding of how organisations work and the responsibility that comes with being a Director, for example. It was agreed at the beginning of the project that the current Directors of Incontrol-able CIC would invite two members of the project to become members of the board.
3. The training that we believed was required to inform prospective members of the project were highlighted in our original bid to the Facilitation Fund. All of the training was specific to informing the members of the issues faced by disabled people in their daily lives and by board members in running our organisation, with the overall objective of making Incontrol-able CIC a sustainable DPULO.



Community Learning Group Award 2012

2.4 Performance against Budget

The Genesis project was delivered under budget to the amount of £2,096.50. This was achieved by identifying local organisations/agencies and by agreeing costs that were lower than normal because of our excellent working relationships. Also, some elements of the training were delivered by a Director within the organisation who remains a registered social worker, but is also a disabled person and therefore brought a unique insight into the session.

An application for '*change of use*' regarding our original bid to the Facilitation Fund was agreed that enabled us to upgrade our organisations website so that it was fit for purpose.

We saved additional funds by contacting the Tees Valley Community Foundation and purchased four laptops that were used by the Project Manager and Members.

2.5 Recommendations

1. Good Practice achieved by the project is shared with Funders, like minded organisations and agencies
2. Funders consider independent user-led organisations as appropriate hosts for future project work.
3. DPULO's to be resourceful in the use of funding.
4. Maintain involvement with people who took part in the project.
5. Have a person-centred culture within the organisation.

3 Lessons learnt

3.1 What Worked Well?

- Maintained our good track record of delivering on projects
- Flexibility of Directors to support the Project Manager to meet the objectives
- Positive working relationships with local commissioners
- Our contacts with local and regional disability organisations
- Being resourceful in use of the budget (purchase of laptops, training fees)
- Use of a local design company for production of project leaflet and logo
- Being Person Centred in our approach
- Using internal/external trainers for awareness sessions
- Approach to ODI for change of use of budget (website)
- The wide knowledge base of participants when working in a group worked well
- Positive relationship with ODI Ambassador
- Meeting deadlines for invoices, payments etc.
- The 'mix' of people involved in the project

- Use of impact assessments for participants
- The use of the facilities at the Centre for Independent Living
- Delivering the project under budget
- Organisation now has a core group of people to assist in the further development of Incontrol-able CIC as a DPULO
- Consultation with Members regarding '*Making it Real*' and future direction of organisation



Genesis Project Awareness Session

3.2 What can be improved?

1. Organisation recruitment process
2. How we engage with people with sensory loss needs
3. Our links with organisations/agencies that support people who are NEET
4. Our relationship with statutory services in promoting our work which would hopefully increase the number of referrals to the organisation
5. How we engage with disabled people in attracting them to become involved in our organisation
6. Our willingness to engage in local training opportunities and events that do not have a direct benefit to the organisation
7. How we engage people in our work, without putting too much responsibility on them
8. Our use of Social Media
9. The application to the Facilitation Fund is too complicated
10. Small organisations like ourselves struggle with core costs, so although we successfully applied for funding for a project manager post there is no guarantee that core staff within the organisation would still be in place

11. How we capture people's stories and experiences
12. How we keep people involved in our ongoing work

3.3 Recommendations

- Build positive working relationships with ODI Ambassadors.
- Simplify the application process for the Facilitation Fund.
- Allow use of the Facilitation Fund for core costs.
- Participants in projects not to be impairment specific
- Only access training that is appropriate to the organisation and the needs of the staff/members.
- Build positive working relationships with like-minded local organisations.

4. Closure Activities

4.1 Recommendations

Project Staff

The Project Manager was given notice in accordance with employment regulations. The Project Manager was provided with the opportunity to feedback their learning and knowledge from their involvement in the project through supervision as part of their self-development. Both Directors from Incontrol-able CIC regularly discussed the performance of the project against the objectives and were satisfied that they were met; however there were issues during the project that required additional support for the Project Manager.

Issues Management

- Ensure that confidential information held as a result of the project is destroyed in accordance with Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Ensure that all equipment used for the term of the project is accounted for.

- Ensure that the final report, including recommendations and project closure is agreed by the appropriate stakeholders.

Financial Management

Throughout the term of the project the ODI were kept fully informed of all the project spend and provided with all receipts and accompanying documentation. As stated previously in this report, the project was delivered under budget.

Records Management

All records remain securely stored on hard copy files and electronic (encrypted) until such time that stakeholders no longer require the information. When information is no longer required it will be destroyed in accordance with Data Protection Policies and Procedures.

Post Project Responsibilities

Meeting to be held with stakeholder on production of the final report to discuss outcomes and recommendations held within the report. This meeting will highlight the positive work achieved by Incontrol-able CIC in their role as a local Disabled People User-Led Organisation and how our practice of working and engaging with disabled people should be shared.

Closure Activities Recommendations

1. Stakeholders agree that the project can be deemed closed.
2. Good Practice achieved by the project is shared with Stakeholders, Commissioners, like-minded organisations and agencies
3. Commissioners consider independent user-led organisations as appropriate hosts for future project work.

The Genesis Project - Linda

We are completing the final report of The Genesis Project for the Office for Disability Issues and we would be grateful if you could help us capture peoples thoughts and experiences of the project?

If you could answer the following points in either a sentence, or short paragraph that would really help? Also, if you are happy to include your photograph that would help people relate to your experiences?

If you require any support to complete this form please let us know. Also, these questions are only a guide and if you would prefer to write something different that is absolutely fine. Thank you for your time.

1. Why did you become involved in the Project?

Because I felt it was important for people with disabilities to have the opportunity to get together to obtain relevant information and discuss their issues in a safe unthreatening environment.

2. What awareness session did you enjoy the most and why?

The last session on care plans as it gave me a lot of information, which I had previously not been given. It will be very useful for my review this summer.

3. What do you think are the benefits of disabled people meeting up and talking about their experiences?

We get the chance to be very open and learn from each other. Although we often have differing illnesses the problems faced are the same for many of us. Listening to how others have dealt with a problem or combining suggestions from others can often help solve a problem or issue.

4. Why do you think User Led Organisations are important and why do you want to remain involved with Incontrol-able CIC?

Especially with an issue like disabilities the only people who truly understand the problems are those who are facing or have faced the problem. Being able to speak openly and not feel stigmatised or looked on in a derisory manner is the biggest advantage of ULOs everybody involved truly understands the issues and does not judge as they have either the same or similar issues themselves.

This group is just starting to develop the confidence of its members and I would like to see that continue to increase and expand. I would very much like to take a more active role in the running of Incontrol-able and would like to join its board when the opportunity allows.



The Genesis Project - Emma

We are completing the final report of The Genesis Project for the Office of Disability Issues and we would be grateful if you could help us capture people's thoughts and experiences of the project?

If you could answer the following points in either a sentence, or short paragraph that would be really helpful? Also, if you are happy to include your photograph that would help people relate to your experience?

1. Why did you become involved in the Project?

I wanted to share previous experiences with others in the group.

2. What awareness session did you enjoy the most and why?

I enjoyed them all. They were all easy to understand, I could get to grips with all the subjects.

3. What do you think are the benefits of disabled people meeting up and talking about their experiences?

You can find out how a more/less able bodied person manages in everyday life.

4. Why do you think User Led Organisations are important and why do you want to remain involved with Incontrol-able CIC?

You can help yourself and others by using each other's knowledge and experiences.

If you require any support to complete this form please let us know. Also, these questions are only a guide and if you prefer to write something different that is absolutely fine. Thank you for your time.

The Genesis Project - Donna

We are completing the final report of The Genesis Project for the Office for Disability Issues and we would be grateful if you could help us capture peoples thoughts and experiences of the project?

If you could answer the following points in either a sentence, or short paragraph that would really help? Also, if you are happy to include your photograph that would help people relate to your experiences?

If you require any support to complete this form please let us know. Also, these questions are only a guide and if you would prefer to write something different that is absolutely fine. Thank you for your time.

1. Why did you become involved in the Project?

To meet like minded people, share ideas, let people's voices with disabilities be heard, widen my knowledge of issues and promote the work of Incontrol-able CIC.

2. What awareness session did you enjoy the most and why?

Support planning. Liked the relaxed format with a good, friendly tutor.

3. What do you think are the benefits of disabled people meeting up and talking about their experiences?

So people do not feel alone, can learn from others and hearing ways of how they cope with facing barriers – raising issues of importance for disabled from disabled people.

4. Why do you think User Led Organisations are important and why do you want to remain involved with Incontrol-able CIC?

Being user led the organisation can focus on what is truly important and that makes a difference to people's lives in various ways from practical to emotional support.

I want to help Incontrol-able become sustainable and raise the awareness of the organisation to broaden the people it can benefit – a really worthy organisation.

Genesis Project - Training / Awareness Session

Evaluation Sheet

Session Title Welfare Benefits Reforms

Name Linda

Date 15 / 2 / 13

1. How much did you know about Welfare Benefits & Reform, before the today's session?

1 2 3 **4** 5

2. How much do you understand about Welfare Benefits & Reform, now you have attended today's session?

1 2 3 4 **5**

3. What did you like about the session?

The clear non-condescending language used by the presenters.

4. What did you not like about the session?

Nothing.

5. How could we improve the session?

Bearing in mind the topic it might have been useful to have some time in a private area for people to talk privately to the advisers.

6. Any other comments / feedback?

Genesis Project - Training / Awareness Session

Evaluation Sheet

Session Title WB & R Awareness

Name Martin

Date 15/02/2013

How much did you know about Welfare Benefits & Reform, before the todays session?

1 2 3 4 5

•How much do you understand about Welfare Benefits & Reform, now you have attended todays session?

1 2 3 4 5

•What did you like about the session?

In an area that is extremely complicated it managed to remain clear and concise

•What did you not like about the session?

Some subject matter got more than a little bogged down due to too many personal questions. A difficult thing to control at the best of times but as it was to cover changes, question should have been kept to a minimum

•How could we improve the session?

Perhaps have a set point for questions and a set time (Difficult I know)

Any other comments / feedback?

It is always difficult to pre-empt any meeting perhaps record them for future analysis

Genesis Project - Training / Awareness Session

Evaluation Sheet

Session Title _Welfare Benefits & Reform Session - Friday 15th February

Name _Donna **Date** 15/02/13

1. How much did you know about Welfare Benefits & Reform, before the todays session?

1 2 3 3.5 4 5

2. How much do you understand about Welfare Benefits & Reform, now you have attended todays session?

1 2 3 4 5

3. What did you like about the session?

Informative setting with others and chance to meet people

4. What did you not like about the session?

Some people 'hogging' the chance to speak and went on a little too long esp as i find it difficult to be in the same position for a certain amount of time

Also the uncertainty still regarding the outcome of the reform

5. How could we improve the session?

Shorter in length and for the session to be controlled/chaired a bit more whilst still giving people the chance to speak

6. Any other comments / feedback?