

OUR CORE BUSINESS

Much of what the Foundation does remains constant from year to year. The primary means of providing a public benefit is through our grant-making, yet it's hard to capture the essence of the Foundation's portfolio and to put it in a bottle with a label. The grants listed later in this report show just how eclectic and wide-ranging our funding is.



Public Catalogue Foundation



SeaWeb / Seafood Choices Alliance

One area of funding we wish to explore further is core funding, be it restricted or unrestricted.

A quick analysis of this year's grants suggests that about half our grants provide core funding in one form or another. These can range from relatively small contributions to core costs through to a level of funding that makes the Foundation a significant contributor to overall income.

For example, this year the A Foundation in Liverpool was offered two years' funding. The A Foundation has played a critical role in establishing Liverpool's reputation as a centre for contemporary art, pioneering the Liverpool Biennial and developing gallery space in Liverpool and London. This funding will help the A Foundation to commission new works and invest in the development of emerging artists.

We have made several grants to the Restorative Justice Consortium (RJC) over recent years and we were pleased to offer further core support. Restorative Justice (RJ) aims to foster dialogue between the perpetrator of a crime or wrongdoing and the victim.

RJC represents practitioners and promotes the use of RJ in different contexts, as well as raising its profile among opinion formers. Our grant will contribute to the infrastructure and salary costs of the organisation, and provide working capital for it to develop potential income-generating activity.

Another small but dynamic organisation receiving core support this year was Econexus, which had previously received project funding. Econexus investigates the hidden consequences and environmental impacts of proposed technical solutions to problems such as food security, biodiversity loss, and climate change. It is an example of a niche organisation that offers a specialist programme of work from a relatively low cost base.

As well as offering core funding, the Foundation sometimes provides continuation funding where it is felt that a further grant is needed for the applicant to fully realise the potential of their work. This year Scottish Ballet received a further two years' funding for an apprenticeship scheme that we first backed in 2006.



Scottish Ballet

The scheme offers six talented young dancers 17-week contracts to cover rehearsal and performance periods. Scottish Ballet's intention is to create a pool of dancers who are more likely to stay or return to Scotland as their careers progress. The development of this model has contributed to the creation of the UK's first conservatoire-based degree in Modern Ballet at the Royal Scottish Academy for Music and Drama and Esmée Fairbairn funding will bridge the gap to the first year of entry of the new scheme.

The Foundation is also happy to provide funding to help an organisation to the next stage of its development or to attract other funders. This year we supported the Public Catalogue Foundation (PCF) to scale up its digitisation work. We were delighted to learn that shortly after our funding was granted several other funders offered their support.

The PCF is increasing access to the estimated 200,000 oil paintings in public ownership (of which it is thought 80% are not routinely publicly accessible) by photographing, cataloguing and digitising them.

Most of the organisations Esmée Fairbairn funds work exclusively in the UK but it can still learn from models developed elsewhere. Two recent examples are Sistema Scotland and SeaWeb/Seafood Choices Alliance (SCA). Sistema is a system pioneered in Venezuela that trains young people to be world-class musicians as well as raising their aspirations in general. A pilot scheme is being introduced in Raploch in Stirling to see if the model can be successfully replicated in the UK.

The funding of SCA continues the Foundation's firm commitment to supporting those who work to protect our marine environment through encouraging a market in sustainable seafood, supporting better regulation, and action research. SCA, led from the US, uses social marketing and communications techniques to persuade the seafood sector (from retailers to the fishing industry) to adopt more sustainable practices. It is working with the leading UK marine and environmental non-governmental organisations to build greater commitment to sustainability.

These are just a small selection of the many organisations Esmée Fairbairn has been privileged to support this year. In subsequent pages you will find details about many others.