

Living Wage Friendly Funder

Case Study



Our Friendly Funder scheme promotes the Living Wage among charities by encouraging Funders to support charities to pay the real Living Wage that meets the cost of living through their grant-making.

People's Health Trust is one of the founders of the Friendly Funders scheme. We asked them what their impressions of the scheme have been so far and how they are going about bringing the Living Wage to the Third Sector.

Q: What motivated your organisation to become a Friendly Funder?

The real Living Wage is key to the voluntary sector's pursuit for social justice. By ensuring that all posts People's Health Trust funds are paid the real Living Wage, we are supporting a higher standard of living for individuals employed within the voluntary and community sector and their families by supporting them out of working poverty. We want to see the Living Wage become the norm in every sector and the voluntary and community sector can lead the way.

Q: What was involved in the journey to become a Friendly Funder?

The Living Wage Friendly Funder scheme was developed by People's Health Trust in collaboration with a range of other established funders including Trust for London, Barrow Cadbury Trust, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Comic Relief.

For the Trust, becoming a real Living Wage accredited employer was just the beginning of an important journey. We then wanted to help our grantees to

become real Living Wage employers too. The Trust piloted paying the Living Wage to grant-funded posts in 2013 and over this time, we noticed that jobs where the Living Wage was not paid tended to be play workers, childcare workers and administrative staff. It also tended to be part-time workers who were most affected.

We wanted to help a movement begin among funding organisations. So we gave our support to the Living Wage Foundation to help make that happen. An important aspect of the journey with other funders was recognising the complexity of all funders insisting that all workers are paid the real Living Wage.

For some community organisations this wasn't possible to introduce the real Living Wage for grant funded posts because, for example, it created unequal pay between members of staff. We had to ensure that the scheme was flexible enough to work for all funders and their applicant organisations. The good thing about this was that it was a genuinely collaborative experience, and continues to be so.

Q: How will you be monitoring the impact of implementing the scheme?

Every year we send a survey to funded charities which have been supported by the Trust to pay the Living Wage to grant-funded staff posts. The information collected helps us to measure the impact the scheme is having across the charity and voluntary sector.

Q: What are your expectations of how it will affect the projects you fund?

When we hear from people who are paid the real Living Wage as the result of People's Health Trust, it really brings the scheme's impact to life. People tell us it's the difference between surviving and living. It also builds people's lives valued.

James Bradshaw is the Project Manager at Killisick Connecting Community Programme. His post is funded at the real Living Wage by People's Health Trust.

He said: "Being paid the Living Wage really makes a difference. Just having that extra bit of money in your pocket makes life a bit easier."

The scheme also encourages the smaller organisations we fund to feel more confident about requesting real Living Wage funding from other funders.

Q: What would you say to other funders thinking of becoming a Living Wage Friendly Funder?

The Friendly Funder scheme is a hugely important initiative because a career in the voluntary and community sector should not mean accepting low pay. It's not just individuals that benefit from the real Living Wage, it's their families, the businesses around them, everyone. Paying the real Living Wage is just one way that the voluntary and community sector can attract, retain and develop good staff.

We're not exclusive – we're a welcoming, expanding movement determined to end low-pay and its lifelong consequences. We hope more funders join us.



Find out more about the Living Wage Friendly Funders

www.livingwage.org.uk