

What is the impact of the CFHS small grants scheme?

February 2010

Background

Since 1997 Community Food and Health (Scotland) or CFHS has run an annual small grants scheme. Groups and agencies working within low-income communities in Scotland can apply for funding from this scheme in order to start or develop food and health activities that tackle one or more barriers to healthy eating experienced by people in low income communities. In 2008, groups could apply for funding from £500 to £3000, from a total budget of £100,000. From 248 applications in 2008, 59 were successful.

The small grant scheme is designed to support community groups that want to develop their current food activities or those that want to undertake food and health activities for the first time. A relatively small amount of money can be applied for by each community group and this money is intended for development purposes. Grants are required to be used within one year and as such evaluation is sought from six months after recipients receive their funds (evaluations are only expected when activity is complete, if necessary groups who have not responded are followed up after 12 months). Evaluation of all activity is part of the grant conditions.

The intended outcomes of the small grants scheme are:

- Community and voluntary groups undertake work to address barriers to access to healthy food in low-income communities across Scotland, through accessing small grants of 'seed' funding.
- Community and voluntary groups learn from their work and through carrying out evaluation of the activities as a result of the small grants scheme, use this learning to develop future activities within low-income communities.
- Community and voluntary groups recognise the value of sustaining food and health activities within low income communities and are stimulated to plan and carry out future food and health activities.

Research aim

Each year, all small grant recipients are expected to complete and return an evaluation of the activities they have undertaken as a result of the small grant scheme. This evaluation currently considers how their planned activities went, any local level evaluation carried out and the sustainability of activities. Each year, information from a sample of projects is gathered and shared through a special edition newsletter in order to inform people how grant money was spent and any lessons learnt from the previous years' activities. The aim of this research project is to establish the impact of the annual small grants scheme, beyond the evaluation of the funded activities.

Objectives

The impact of the annual small grants scheme considers a number of different aspects:

- the benefits of the small grant for the participants, the community and the community group;
- how any learning from the work undertaken has been used by the community groups themselves;

- what future activities were stimulated by the food and health activities funded through the small grant and;
- the sustainability of food and health activities.

Research methods

A suggested approach will be requested in the invitation to tender; however, there will be two key components to this research:

1. Desk based research: 48 evaluations were received from the 2008 grant recipients. The applications and evaluation forms for all these grant recipients will be reviewed.
2. 1:1 interviews: it is anticipated that 16 1:1 interviews will be held with community and voluntary groups who were successful grant recipients in 2008. These will be either face-to-face or over the phone, dependent on the needs of the community and voluntary groups.

Research budget and timescales

The budget required for this work is anticipated to be in the region of £9,000 (inc. VAT). Expressions of interest should be submitted by **midday on Friday 5 March 2010**. It is anticipated a contract will be awarded in spring 2010 and the work will be completed by September 2010.

Contact details

For more information on this project please contact Katrina Reid at Katrina.reid@consumerfocus.org.uk or 0141 227 1840

It should be noted, the awarded contract will be managed by Community Food and Health (Scotland), within Consumer Focus Scotland.

Submission of an Expression of Interest

To note your interest in this evaluation please complete the Expression of Interest (EOI) template below and submit to Katrina.reid@consumerfocus.org.uk by **midday on Friday 5 March 2010**. Alternatively please send completed forms to Community Food and Health (Scotland), c/o Consumer Focus Scotland, Royal Exchange House, 100 Queen Street, Glasgow, G1 3DN.

Further information

EOIs should outline your relevant skills and experience to undertake this specific evaluation for us. EOIs should not detail websites addresses for further information.

EOIs submitted will be assessed on their:

- Understanding of the specific evaluation issues
- Relevant experience in the above topic or related areas
- Relevant skills in the appropriate methodologies and experience working with the above target audiences

Please note word limits on the form indicate the level of detail we require.

As the number of EOIs received may exceed the number of contractors who will be invited to tender, their submission should not be taken as a guarantee of inclusion on the tender shortlist. CFHS will notify by email all researchers as to the outcome of the consideration of submitted EOIs.

Expression of Interest

Project title: What is the impact of the CFHS small grants scheme?

Agency name:

Agency address:

Contact name:

Contact email address:

Telephone number:

Briefly indicate the skills available within your agency to carry out the research (max. 200 words):

Please indicate previous research experience (max. 300 words):

Please return your completed Expression of Interest by email attachment to katrina.reid@consumergfocus.org.uk by midday on Friday 5 March 2010.

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