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4.1.2 Report on Case Studies for Social Innovation Connect



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Introduction

This report has been developed in line with action 4.1.2 in the project, which is to choose and monitor a number of high level case studies that showcase the Scottish social innovation ecosystem. We have collected a number of case studies from across Scotland and variety across sectors. There are a number of sectors involved in the case studies; from social enterprise, to charities, to civic organisations. There are also a range of themes addressed across the case studies, including; housing, elder care, homelessness, civic services, education, co-working, internationalisation, and storytelling as a medium for supporting mental health. For each case study, we have shared their story and a description of their activities. Each case study was interviewed or information was collected directly from them to write the study in this document.



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The Case Studies



Lingo Flamingo

Story and History

The inception of [Lingo Flamingo](#) began in 2015 with observation of older family relations facing stigma and isolation, while also conducting research into language skills postponing dementia, as well as a background in languages. Firstport support was engaged for the original pilot and funding once established; followed by support from organisations like the Big Lottery Fund, Robertson Trust, and Foundation Scotland.

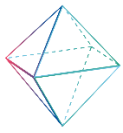
Lingo Flamingo operates two key strands: community classes for adults run through a hub in the south of Glasgow, offered in-person and online for a period of 10 weeks each time, and their work with older adults, including those living with dementia in care homes, community groups and day centres across Scotland. The language classes in the community help to subsidise the work done with older adults in care homes and associated facilities. The community hub offer Spanish, Italian, French, Japanese, German, and Polish language classes. They offer a Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) qualification; a National Two Unit, in either Spanish, Italian or French. They plan to offer this qualification in Gaelic and German in the future also.

The language classes with older adults are able to offer a range of benefits around cognition, wellbeing, cultural exchange, and upskilling. Since they have begun, they have worked with around 2800 older adults, as well as delivered around 4000 classes overall in both strands. There are around ten freelancers that work via the hub, as well as six staff members, two of whom are full time. Classes are taught with sensory and interactive techniques to make them enjoyable and memorable for those learning. On their website, Lingo Flamingo share statistics about the fact that those who speak a second language tend to develop dementia later than those that do not, as well as speaking a second language influences a faster stroke recovery. These statistics indicate that language skills have a greater effect than current pharmaceutical options available currently.

There has been work undertaken with both Edinburgh University, and the Yunus Centre at Glasgow Caledonian University to look at the effects on wellbeing for over 60 year olds in this area of work done by Lingo Flamingo, which also reinforces the impact that they have. Data has shown that language based activities in this age group increases wellbeing, confidence, and the ability of people to reaffirm their identities. People involved enjoyed doing something new and different, as well as being able to remember a few words after a lesson. The aim is to ensure it is



enjoyable for those that take the classes, and although cognitively it is not the same as brought up bilingual there are still promising cognitive results shown. Lingo Flamingo also aims to challenge stigma about age appropriate activities, where certain activities are seen as more fitting to older adults.



Invisible Cities

Story and History

[Invisible Cities](#) was born out of the founder - Zakia Moulaoui's - work with the Homeless World Cup between 2011-2015. This catalyzed an understanding of homelessness and why people become homeless. Travel was also a big part of Zakia's life which led to an idea about raising awareness of homelessness with tours. The idea was then put through the Melting Pot's Good Ideas Academy programme, with extra support offered by others in the homelessness sphere in Scotland like the CEO of the Homeless World Cup, the Big Issue Invest Programme, and Social Bite cafes.

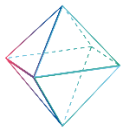
They recruit and train people who have experienced homelessness to become walking tour guides. Some of the guides end up offering tours of their cities, interwoven with their own experiences of those cities and the homelessness they have experienced. The offer support to everyone that accesses their training, even if they do not become guides – for example, day to day support in housing or services, accessing further education, or reuniting with family and friends for example. The training is delivered in a variety of mediums, and with co-delivery or support from a number of organisations. Training is delivered in a number of areas such as culture, heritage, customer services, confidence, and public speaking. Organisations such as Booking.com, local hotels, Glasgow Life, St Andrews First Aid deliver training to those that access it. Those that take the training are offered a 'Graduation Day', and are asked to write their own tour as part of the training programme. Over 100 guides have been trained since Invisible Cities started. Future plans include developing more variety in tours such as Black History, female history, and catering to different tourist demographics and characteristics based on location.

Invisible Cities started with four guides, and identified a number of skills areas to organize training in such as customer service, first aid and tour guiding. It was officially launched in 2016 in Edinburgh, and has since grown to a number of other cities including Glasgow, Manchester, York, and plans to launch in Cardiff and Liverpool. Currently, there are now sixteen guides in the four established locations. They have around 80% male trainees and guides; partly due to the fact homelessness in female populations is much more hidden, and there is potential of women fleeing abuse when they are homeless. They have stated that all of the women they train or work with have experienced domestic abuse. A number of their female



guides are also transgender and they have stated that large numbers of their guides from the LGBTQ+ community experience homelessness.

Particular challenges faced by the organization in recent years have included Covid - due to the nature of the business model and tours, the support of the guides who may have challenges in their life that affects their availability or continuity at times, and the stigma associated with homelessness and breaking this down.



Challenges Worldwide

Story and History

[Challenges Worldwide](#) was formed in 1999, on the belief that a strong and prosperous economy is the best way to address poverty. They have worked in more than 70 countries worldwide to support better access to goods, services and money in those communities.

The company works on the basis that focusing on helping businesses and markets to grow, that they help communities along the supply chain to prosper and empower people and reduce their reliance on instable forms of support like charity or aid. They have offices across Sub-Saharan Africa and in Scotland. They also work to connect the ecosystem of social enterprise and innovation in Scotland with markets in other countries around the world where they have a good market knowledge and connections. Since 2014, their work has focused on Sub-Saharan Africa, and now there are Challenges offices in Ghana, Uganda, Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia that are supporting local businesses and individuals to improve and create sustainable economies that promote prosperity for all. They believe that prosperity isn't just about wealth, but that it is about accessing all of the benefits that wealth brings: access to safe drinking water; food security; a good education; fair and equal job opportunities; decent health care and protection from the effects of climate change. They have supported 3500 businesses since they began, across the world.

They operate a number of areas of work, one of which is their Youth to Work Programme. This programme is a partnership between young people and private enterprise in Kampala, Lusaka and Accra to support youth employability in these areas which can be particularly high. This programme aims to drive positive change in business and communities.

The Challenges Catalyst is a part of the organization and offers a range of business development services such as business support to clients, partners and other members of the Challenges Group family, while also undertaking research and analysis, project design and management, and monitoring and evaluation of markets and business activities in multiple places.

Challenges Worldwide also coordinates development programmes in countries where there is no permanent office such as Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Georgia and Scotland.

They also support the growth of an ecosystem of support and anchor organisations for the social enterprise and impact sector in Scotland. Montgomery Street Lane enterprise is a co-



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working and collaboration workspace with partners in Firstport, Volunteering Scotland and Project Scotland to enable partnerships and better connected support for the ecosystem in Scotland.

Social Enterprise Academy

Story and History

[Social Enterprise Academy](#) (SEA) started in 2004 to help train social entrepreneurs to create fairer communities where people have equitable access to opportunities. They have supported over 10,000 learners through their accredited qualifications focusing on leadership, social entrepreneurship and social impact measurement. They were founded as an independent organisation and are a social enterprise themselves. The founding partners identified that whilst strong training and advice was available on the technical competences needed to start businesses, traditional training or business support tended not to meet the specific needs of social entrepreneurs. The Academy's products are designed to support leaders and organisations at each stage of development, for leaders at all levels, and young people – the next generation of social enterprise leaders – in formal education and beyond. This is a unique offer missing in many support ecosystems.

Their model is via delivery from practitioners themselves, acting as facilitators to the training. They deliver to local communities, organisations and in schools. They have high learner results including a 99% recommendation rate. SEA has partnered with the Scottish Government and sought funds via grants, EU funding and local funds in communities to deliver their training. They operate with established SEA hubs in a number of regions and countries to deliver their training programmes. This began in the north of Scotland, but has been so successful that this has now been implemented in countries across the world.

They have implemented replication in other countries based on four key aspects: Products, Systems, Strategy and Support. They work with staff in other countries who are experienced and specialist in their fields. They use small local teams to draw on expertise in each area, and who understand the local context in that area and ensure that they establish strong local partnerships in each location they work in. Some areas they work in adopt an SEA hub, and other areas adopt the training materials and approach to deliver in tandem with their own activities. They have hubs and programmes active now in Africa, Asia, Australia and other areas of Europe, as well as in multiple regions across the UK. They have delivered training on almost every inhabited remote Highland island across Scotland.

Social Enterprise Academy has a strong ethos of peer learning. The flow of skills between social enterprise leaders is enhanced - both within and between organisations, and across countries



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The outcome is resilient social enterprise support ecosystems, better able to enhance the capacity of social enterprises, who in turn are enabled to bring about change.



The Village Storytelling Centre

Story and History

[The Village Storytelling Centre](#) was set up in 2000 by a local church in Pollok in Glasgow. They operate, however, as a non-religious organisation. The church recognised that the local area had particular needs and issues that they wanted to address around unemployment, homelessness, violence, and local gang culture. They utilise storytelling and creative practices to address the issues in the community and empower individuals in the area to deal with complex issues and give them a voice when they often do not have one.

Over time, their success has enabled them to develop into working with other groups across Glasgow and the wider area such as people with disabilities, refugees, LGBTQ+ groups, people experiencing homelessness, people in recovery, people with life limiting conditions, people in prison and women affected by male violence.

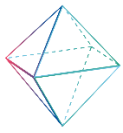
The aim of their work is to support people with lived experience through applied storytelling to process trauma and give them a voice. Their techniques vary but may involve creating a fictional character, examining existing stories, future based stories, or telling their own story. A key part of the process is about building trust slowly and carefully, particularly with groups of people that this may be difficult with. The aim is to build in the services that support these groups of people, as well as staff and organisations that they can trust and access. They believe that lived experience can shape positive change and that sharing stories can be used to empower people and even inform or shape policy. They encourage those in workshops to focus on three things: resilience, hope and what is needed for future achievement or focus on their personal attributes and skillsets.

The process of storytelling they use is a collaborative art form. Their facilitators focus on using laughter or humour, ensuring ownership and not holding court, continuous check points and on pulling back when covering uncomfortable ground before the group as a whole is ready. They currently work with a large group of volunteers, as well as three staff members, five core storytellers, four associate storytellers/artists/filmmakers. They utilise many community based spaces, and some spaces with more particular technology or facilities where appropriate. They work with all age groups, including babies and infants to the elderly. Their normal group sizes are from six to twelve participants, working over up to twelve sessions.



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They are now looking at how they can work with local authorities like Glasgow City Council and Perth and Kinross Council to use story led practices to form policy and practice in public services and within the culture of practice in civic organisations.



The Melting Pot

Story and History

[The Melting Pot](#) is positioned as Scotland's Centre for Social Innovation. Their vision is to create a world which has a vibrant, creative, resilient and effective social innovation community. They have a mission to stimulate and support social innovation and their ethos is about being innovative, practical, inspiring, respectful, connecting and transformational. The Melting Pot wants to effect social change by connecting people and supporting their ideas, passions and expertise. They are a key part of the social enterprise ecosystem in Scotland, offering a highly flexible co-working space, an award-winning incubation programme, and an acceleration and mentoring support programme for like-minded collaborative spaces aiming to operate a similar model to The Melting Pot itself.

They first started in 2007 a number of years developing by grassroots practitioners, led by founder and CEO, Claire Carpenter. Her aim was to create a base of resources for collaborative working and learning, particularly geared towards social enterprises and to support those with a similar mission and purpose. They were one of the first co-working spaces in Scotland, and one of the first to offer a co-working space for mission led entrepreneurs in Europe at the time.

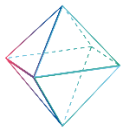
The Melting Pot offers an award winning incubation programme called Good Ideas. The Good Ideas programme has helped a number of Scotland's most innovative entrepreneurs develop and start mission led and socially innovative ideas up, including at least one example in this report – Invisible Cities. The programme has been in operation for at least ten years, and originally started in Edinburgh, it has now been offered across Scotland.

The Good Ideas programme has engaged and developed over 200 social innovators and they have incubated 91 different social ventures of which 46 are still operating (or in development) today. The programme uses a multi-stage spiral process that is used by the Young Foundation and NESTA, as well as academic institutions for growing and scaling social innovation. They start with Catalyst workshops, then leading onto Bootcamps, followed by a more intensive and longer programme for incubation and launch. Many of those that undertake the full programme go on to plug into other key organisations supporting social innovation across Scotland such as Firstport, Challenges Worldwide and Social Enterprise Academy. The network and community of budding social entrepreneurs and more established ones has become a key support tool for



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many in the sector, when operating as a social entrepreneur can be an isolating and lonely experience at times.



Sanctuary Housing Team

Story and History

Sanctuary Housing is a project within the social housing sector, in the provider Sanctuary Housing with the Community Investment Team. This team has taken a different approach, innovating within the organisation to address the social issues they encounter working as housing officers in the local Pollok community in Glasgow.

They operate with an alternative community work model, looking at problems of deprivation as something to be understood rather than solved. They have examined the attitudes towards tenants in their housing and are trying to make the housing approach more humane, particularly in relation to chronic issues like addiction, non-payment and compliance with rent and housing conditions. They had noticed when they began that many of the activities and support on offer was not being accessed by those in Sanctuary Housing and the aim was to try and understand why this was happening, and create manageable actions for tenants to become more engaged and more compliant with renting conditions, also addressing some of their key needs.

They are a team of seven housing officers, and they use a human centred approach, particularly to understand trauma in their residents and to ensure their approach is trauma reformed and trauma responsive. They aim to directly employ people within their team who have experienced homelessness and addiction; so that they can offer understanding and lived experience to residents they work directly with. They spend a lot of their time reframing their questions and approach through a lens to understand those they work with better, as well as working to radically simplify processes and information they share to make services and bureaucracy around housing much easier to use. The team have reformed practices within the organisation so that residents are not judged on rent arrears, and to implement part payments or micro payments of rent for residents with particular compliance issues. They have managed to bring in greater consistency of part payment of rent in residents that struggle with payment due to addiction and inconsistent income.

The team has also worked closely with the local community and other social housing providers to bring greater social cohesion in the area and improve the area and services for everyone in the Pollok area, not just those in Sanctuary housing. They apply for funding to bring about improvements, and to create a community fund, and a revolving Crisis Fund for residents. The



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team organise community events with speakers, services brought to the community facilities rather than in city centre, and operate regular community breakfast and meal events.



Centre for Civic Innovation

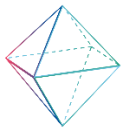
Story and History

[The Centre for Civic Innovation](#) is established and based within Glasgow City Council. They take a unique approach to understanding citizen challenges and the services that the council can offer by co-designing with citizens. They believe that the current model for delivering public services is grounded in underlying assumptions and is subject to changing demands from citizens.

The CCI combines design thinking, research and data science to understand and help solve complex societal problems that are difficult to articulate, challenging to solve and have no single or easy answer. To help understand people's values, attitudes and behaviours towards local and citywide policy and services, the team use a range of innovation methods such as Design, Co-creation and digital and data science amongst others. They lead new ways of working across the council; fostering a collaborative approach which involves citizens throughout their design process from initial research to co-designing solutions.

They have undertaken a number of pioneering projects to understand wicked problems in the city. One such area of work focused on the area of understanding child poverty in Glasgow. They used data to create Scotland's most accurate picture of Child Poverty in Glasgow, and was shortlisted for awards based on this project of work. The Scottish Government made a commitment that by 2030 less than 10% of children should be living in relative poverty. Working in partnership with Glasgow City Councils Financial Inclusion team, The Centre for Civic Innovation set out the aim of discovering: How many children in Glasgow are living in households experiencing relative poverty. They undertook desk research, client interviews and workshops to gain knowledge required to start understanding the questions around the issue. Over 6 months their data scientists took a deep dive into the data Glasgow City Council holds on Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction recipients, as well as bringing in data around kinship care and education benefits.

From the evidence gathered they established that 26% of children in the city are living in relative poverty, and established priority groups that would require support, one of these being single parent households, after ascertaining that two thirds of children experiencing relative poverty in Glasgow come from a single parent household.



This work has enabled the local authority to understand that certain public services that may support children in poverty in Glasgow further are not being utilized and how they may be able to better support engagement with these services, such as free school meals or the School Clothing Grant. This has enabled pilot projects to offer targeted support and services like embedding Financial Inclusion Support Officers in schools in Glasgow where they work to support financially vulnerable parents to ensure that their family has all the support they need.