

Foundation Scotland celebrating 25 years

Foundation Scotland, Scotland's community foundation, marks the organisation's silver anniversary this St Andrew's Day – also aptly named "Giving Tuesday" this year.

Originally established in 1996 as "Scotland's Community Foundation", the major funder brings together communities and funders. Since its launch a quarter of a century ago the foundation has distributed more than £130 million to charitable organisations, social enterprises, and community groups operating across Scotland. While Foundation Scotland is also a charity, the body exists to provide a simpler way for funds to be managed and awarded to the charities which will use them.





With an experienced team and a Board of Trustees the Foundation has its own strategies guiding funding decisions. Their main income comes from donations, so that every time a donor gives to a charitable grant or programme which Foundation Scotland then manage there is a donation made to the foundation.



Edinburgh Tool Library

Since March 2020 Foundation Scotland has distributed over £32 million. In total, 5,685 grants awarded to 2,976 organisations operating across Scotland. The Response, Recovery and Resilience Fund made 1,484 grants to 1,190 organisations.

The foundation specialises in supporting charitable initiatives within local communities. From local food banks to counselling services, to youth groups and education and training funds. Set up with an initial group of three staff, the Edinburgh-based foundation now has over 30 managing around 100 different national and local funding programmes each year. Earlier this year the foundation began offering investment for social enterprises following the integration with Resilient Scotland, further expanding the breadth of financial support offered to charitable groups and enterprises.

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Through the pandemic, Foundation Scotland awarded over £1.1 million in crisis support grants to 268 Edinburgh-based community projects. Supported groups included The Eric Liddell Centre, East Lothian Roots and Fruits, Sikh Sanjog, Bridgend Farmhouse and The Edinburgh Tool Library. Quite often, groups can be eligible for more than one source of funding from the foundation and some organisations have received ongoing support from Foundation Scotland for many years. The team pride themselves in getting to know and understand funded groups, supporting them with essential funding and vital advice to help them to develop and sustain their services.



Eric Liddell Centre Indian Dance group

Giles Ruck, Chief Executive at Foundation Scotland, said: “We are proud to be Scotland’s community foundation. For 25 years, we’ve maintained the vision of supporting confident, thriving, resilient communities across Scotland. And for every community to thrive, it should be resourced to match its

vision and powered by transformative funding. That's where we come in. Over the last quarter of a century, we have connected the generosity of donors, corporates and individuals, to enable and empower vital projects and grassroot-led change.

As we look ahead, we will continue to work hard to reach and connect with new donors keen to distribute funds effectively at a local level so that together we can continue to deliver extraordinary support."



Giles Ruck CEO Founder of Foundation Scotland

The generosity of local donors

Foundation Scotland is an independent charity. The funds awarded to projects within Scotland's communities are the result of the generosity of donors who support the foundation's work. The breadth of donors includes individuals, families, companies, community bodies and other charities who distribute funds. The foundation connects donors' funds with community organisations working on the ground, ensuring their support stays relevant to local circumstances and delivers real impact. Even throughout the pandemic, new donors have come on board, and new funds have opened to help support communities through the crisis and beyond.

In summer 2020, Edinburgh-based investment management company, Martin Currie, approached Foundation Scotland to design and brand a new fund to help them support charities and community groups in Edinburgh, but also with consideration for projects across Scotland.

Their priorities were to address inequality and support initiatives that improved social and environmental sustainability. The Martin Currie Community Partnership Programme (MCCPP) launched in September, and to date has awarded almost £44,000 between 8 organisations.

Recent grantees include Edinburgh Remakery, The Venchie Children and Youth Project and The Salisbury Centre.

Rosslyn McDonald, Head of Distribution Operations for Martin Currie said “The MCCPP is delighted to partner with Foundation Scotland to support local charities that promote diversity and inclusion, or social and environmental sustainability.

“The programme was established in 2020 and focusses on the communities where we live and work by partnering with and building deep and lasting relationships with organisations who are well placed to help us deliver Martin Currie’s goal to improve lives.”

The Melting Pot

The Melting Pot is Scotland’s Centre for Social Innovation. Based in Edinburgh’s city centre on Calton Road, the organisation runs a large coworking hub, meeting venue and events programme for charities, social businesses, campaigners, and freelancers.



The Melting Pot

Foundation Scotland has supported The Melting Pot for over 15 years. The organisation received its first award from the funder back in 2006 and has received £120,000 from a number of different funds to support their growth and development since then.



Claire Carpenter

Claire Carpenter, Founder and CEO of The Melting Pot said: “Foundation Scotland have been an instrumental investor for me and The Melting Pot.

“They’ve been part of the birthing story – twice now! Back in the 2000s when “Coworking” wasn’t a thing you could Google,

they saw the potential in my big, novel and very practical idea to better support our sector, in all its diversity. Then, due to Covid, the landscape changed once again – for good. We've been able to play to each other's strengths to help #BuildBackBetter.

"I'm looking forward to seeing how together we co-create the conditions for social innovators to thrive in the years ahead."

From grantmaking to social investment opportunities, legacies to bursaries, Foundation Scotland is continually developing innovative and effective ways for donors to help Scotland's communities thrive. Anyone interested in finding out more can contact development@foundationscotland.org.uk or call 0131 524 0300.

<https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/>