

Edinburgh charities among those to benefit from £1m-plus funding boost to help transform lives

Scottish charity projects to tackle food poverty, break down barriers for people with physical and learning disabilities and preserve Scotland's history and natural heritage will be able to reach more people than ever before thanks to a funding boost of more than £1 million from the ScottishPower Foundation.

Nine of Scotland's most inspiring and innovative charities have been awarded a share of £1.1 million from the Foundation's 2022 funding allocation to drive positive change across the country and give people and communities the chance to reach their full potential.

An ambitious project to tackle food poverty in a Glasgow high-rise estate will help disadvantaged people and families access affordable, healthy and nutritious food. The Linkes Community Food Project at the Lincoln Avenue estate in Knightswood will establish a dedicated Community Food Hub for local people.

During the pandemic, the charity piloted a weekly Community Food Hub, providing grocery packs in response to an increase in food poverty and delivering more than 18,000 meals to older people and 2,000 grocery packs to families. The ScottishPower Foundation funding will help create a permanent base for the Hub, establish a food activity and distribution programme – including cooking sessions, home-growing and meal kits – as well as help people access wider support services.

Melanie Hill, Executive Officer and Trustee at the ScottishPower Foundation, said: “The Community Food Project is a terrific example of the difference our funding can make and will be life-changing for all those who benefit, relieving a huge amount of pressure for anyone worrying about where the next meal is coming from. Linkes is a real driving force in the local community and will deliver the project in conjunction with local people to ensure it helps those who need it most. We’re proud to play a part in making that happen.”

Niki Logan, Senior Community Development Worker at The Linkes Community Food Project said: “We are so pleased with the support from ScottishPower Foundation. This funding will allow us to progress a new venue on the estate to distribute good food in a fair and more sustainable way. The launch of this project will make a huge difference to our local community, many of whom have been faced with food poverty as a result of the increase in cost of living. This initiative will provide local residents with the increased food security they need and deserve. We will also be working with local people to design and plant a small food forest and look forward to that bearing fruit for years to come”.

Other 2022 funded projects include the National Library of Scotland, which is accelerating its ‘Scotland’s Tapes Go Digital’ project, which aims to preserve Scotland’s history and stories from across the decades. The project will digitalise a collection of video and audio tapes from the

1950s to the 2000s that were at risk of being lost forever. This material will be used as part of the 'Centenary of Broadcasting in Scotland' celebrations in 2023, which will mark 100 years of BBC Scotland.

Alison Stevenson, Associate Director of Collections & Research, National Library of Scotland said: "The National Library of Scotland is digitising a collection of video and audio tapes, to save them for the future. They capture life in Scottish communities from the 1950s to the 2000s, including Gaelic language broadcasts. We're delighted to receive support from the ScottishPower Foundation, which will help us make this material available to the public. We'll be celebrating the Centenary of Broadcasting in Scotland in 2023 with events at Glasgow's Kelvin Hall and around Scotland, bringing people together to share memories and enjoy delving into the collection."

Elsewhere, Whizz-Kidz' Wheeling for Independence' projects will train new practitioners across Scotland to help young wheelchairs use their wheelchairs more independently, while Cutting Edge Theatre's 'INSPIRE Disability Arts' project will help establish equal access to the performing arts for those who have learning disabilities.

The Green Team in Edinburgh and the Lothians will grow its 'Green Shoots' project, which provides opportunities for disadvantaged young people to engage with nature. Participants will work together to improve local greenspaces, while learning wilderness living skills and nature connection techniques to deepen their connection to the natural environment.

Playlist for Life, based in Anderston in Glasgow, will launch its 'Music Connects Communities' project to help families living with dementia. The charity will create a UK-wide network of Help Points where people affected by dementia can access free information and support to create personalised

playlists, which have been found to be extremely beneficial for those living with dementia.

Fife wildlife conservation charity, Froglife, will restore Cowdenbeath Wetland and Swan Pond to help build habitats for freshwater bodies and simultaneously improve the biodiversity of the surrounding area.

Edinburgh Science's 'Generation Science 2022' project will help improve primary science education for children in the most deprived areas of Scotland and provide opportunities they would not normally get to experience. The project will provide fun and engaging science workshops that contribute to raising aspirations among children across Scotland.

The ScottishPower Foundation is also supporting Street League – a charity devoted to changing the lives of disadvantaged young people through the power of football. Through its award-winning sport and employability programme, Street League will provide 1,000 young people with the second chance they deserve to gain qualifications and move into sustained employment, education, or further training.

Melanie Hill added: "The wide variety of projects we're able to support this year allows us to make a lasting impact on all aspects of people's lives and crucially – in the current climate – helps charities continue the incredible work they do every day to help those who don't have the same opportunities as others. It's a privilege to support them and I can't wait to see the changes this year's projects will make for people and places across the UK."

The ScottishPower Foundation's 2022 funding investment sees the charity hit the milestone of £10 million in funding grants it's given out since it was established in 2013.

Throughout the years, the Foundation has supported and championed projects across Britain which help advance education, environmental protection, the arts, culture,

science and provide relief for those in need through poverty, disability or disadvantage.

A series of activities is planned to celebrate the landmark funding figure throughout 2022.