

Charity opens new Coffee Saints in Grassmarket

Grassmarket Community Project received £375,000 from Foundation Scotland to extend vital city-centre facilities.

Offering everything from woodwork classes to meals for those who are homeless, the Grassmarket Community Project aims to create a community and provide sanctuary for those in the city who are often excluded. The registered charity runs the fully accessible community hub and café on Candlemakers Row where people can pop in for their caffeine fix and something fresh to eat knowing that all profits support social good in the area.

However, with demand for their services growing year on year, and with the café rapidly running out of space, the registered charity secured funding from Foundation Scotland. An investment of £375,000 has enabled the organisation to extend its existing facilities and create a brand-new pavilion space hosting Coffee Saints, a larger, bright and friendly café and improved spaces for activities.

Ricky Ross is a long-term supporter of the Grassmarket Community Project's work and attended to officially open the space and meet staff, volunteers, supporters and local people.



Ali Kennedy (Foundation Scotland), Jonny Kinross (Grassmarket Community Project) and Chris Holloway (Foundation Scotland) 1Grassmarket Community Project

Foundation Scotland, Scotland's community foundation, offers social investment funding to social enterprises, community organisations and charities. Part of the funding is through a non-repayable grant, with the remainder through a loan. Foundation Scotland's social investment team prides itself on its relationship-based support and helps successful applicants to build and develop their project.

Chris Holloway, Head of Social Investment at Foundation Scotland, said, "Grassmarket Community Project secured £375,000 from Foundation Scotland and we have worked closely together across the last few years to get to this exciting stage. Jonny and the team have worked so hard to get to where we are today. It's great to finally have the doors open and get to see inside the spaces which will mean so much to so many.

"The funding landscape has changed monumentally post-covid.

There are far fewer available opportunities for capital costs, and building costs are rising significantly. Yet we know groups urgently need this support to get started or grow. We've invested over £12.5 million in 72 organisations across the last ten years. This funding, combined with our dedicated and experienced support, has delivered transformational change. We enable socially conscious groups to become more sustainable, grow, and become less reliant on grant funding. It's a win-win all round, and our impact reporting shows that this funding model works. We are encouraging all interested groups to visit our website or contact our team directly to discuss their eligibility".

Jonny Kinross, CEO of Grassmarket Community Project, said: "The support we've received from the team at Foundation Scotland has been instrumental in enabling us to plan, develop and now finally officially open our fantastic new café and pavilion in the centre of the city.

"We're extremely grateful to have received such a significant sum across the combination of loan and grant funding but above this, the team have offered a real partnership approach to the finance, which has been so refreshing and supportive. They have taken the time to understand our business, the challenges and the opportunities presented. Like everyone else, our project was inevitably held up through the crisis, but the team have been with us every step of the way. We are so excited that our doors are now open, and we can't wait to meet old and new friends for a coffee in the new café."

Foundation Scotland's 'Investing in Enterprise Fund' offers up to a quarter of a million pounds in blended finance to eligible social enterprises, community organisations and charities operating in 18 local authority areas.

For more information, including details on how to apply for the Investing in Enterprise Fund visit: foundationscotland.org.uk/social-investment.

The Grassmarket Community Project believes in a world where people reach their full potential, feel positive about themselves, valued and connected to others and the wider community. The Grassmarket Centre on Candlemaker Row was officially opened by John Swinney, MSP on 25 April 2013. The centre has won architectural awards for its design and is home to our community, which is supported through a combination of our award-winning social enterprises, charitable grants and donations.

