

## Grants to Combat Vaccine/Testing Inequality and Hesitancy Interim Report 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021

In April 2021 Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council (EVOC) began distributing micro-grants on behalf of Edinburgh & Lothians Health Foundation (ELHF) to community organisations based across Edinburgh and the Lothians. Groups could apply for up to £500 and the funding was to support the COVID-19 vaccination programme, supporting those who may be experiencing vaccine inequality and hesitancy.

After an initial £10,000, in July ELHF provided an additional £10,000 to distribute, and widened the objectives to include testing for the virus. At a time when case numbers were rising it was even more important that the sector was able to support these groups to get vaccinated and/or tested. We allowed organisations who had previously applied to apply for a second grant.

This funding has been provided on a first come first served basis. Currently (3<sup>rd</sup> Dec 21), 31 grants have been distributed totalling £14,693 and £5,307 remains unspent.

### 1. Where?

Figure 1 and Table 1 show how the grants were distributed across Edinburgh and the Lothians.

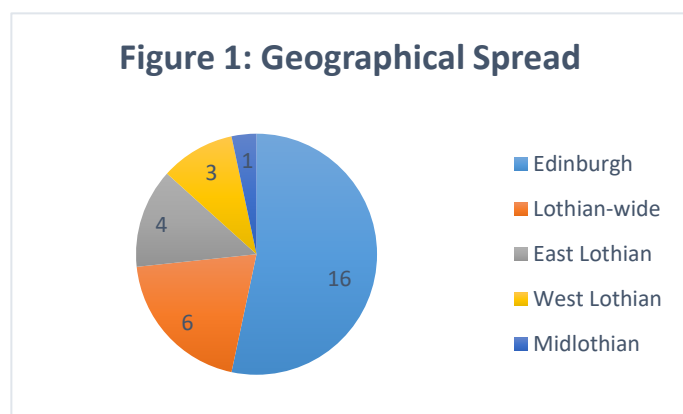


Table 1: Area	Number of grants	Amount awarded
Edinburgh	16	£7693.00
East Lothian	4	£2000.00
Midlothian	1	£500.00
West Lothian	3	£1500.00
Lothian-wide	6	£3000.00

### 2. What?

Figure 2 and Table 2 show the activities which were carried out. The majority of groups carried out more than one activity with the grant. A full list of activities is detailed in Appendix 1.

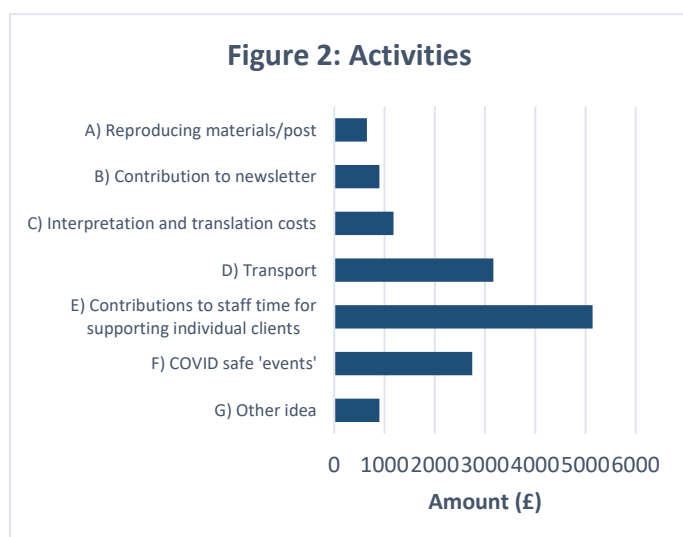


Table 2: Activity	Number of grants	Amount awarded
(A) Reproducing materials/post	10	£650.00
(B) Contribution to a newsletter	7	£900.00
(C) Interpretation and translation costs	8	£1180.00
(D) Transport	15	£3167.00
(E) Contributions to staff time for supporting individual clients	21	£5146.00
(F) COVID safe 'events'	13	£2750.00
(G) Other idea	2	£900.00

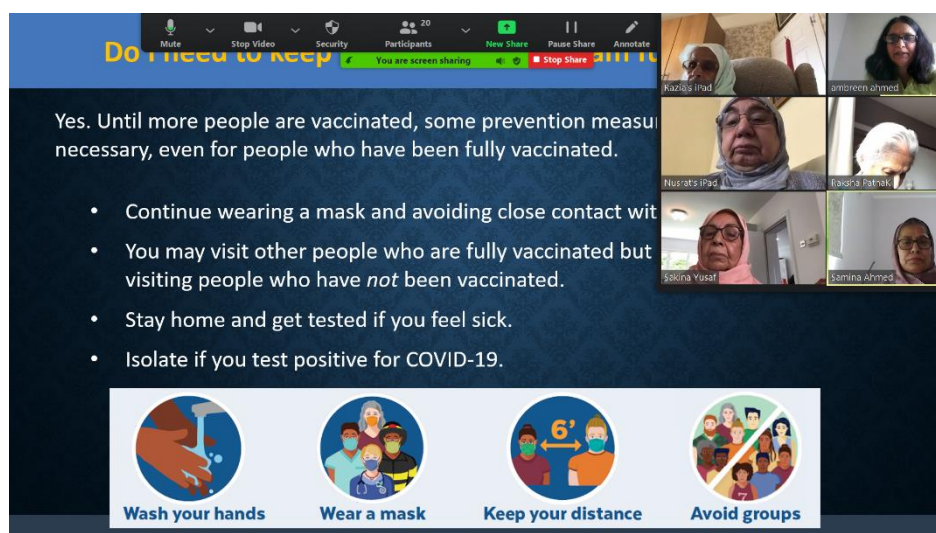
### 3. Evaluation

To date 24 evaluation forms have been returned indicating that 4084 people have been supported through this funding. The groups told us about some of the specific activities they held:

- Guest speakers, such as medical practitioners provided information about vaccines to groups experiencing inequality and hesitancy.
- Health advice was translated into different languages.
- Transport was provided to and from vaccination centres.
- Individuals were assisted to make appointments and navigate online systems as many found the process difficult and stressful.
- Videos were produced to dispel the spread of false information e.g. in British Sign Language.
- Social media material about vaccinations and testing was circulated to groups such as carers; black, Asian and minority ethnic communities; people with disabilities; people with medical conditions; young parents.
- Individual clients experiencing anxiety and stress around getting the vaccine were supported.
- Newsletters from local community groups provided a trusted and accessible point of information to hundreds of people.

We asked: **what difference do you think the grant has made?** Responses included:

Milan Senior Welfare Organisation told us that older people have a great influence within their households and having them understand that vaccinations are safe and help save lives, enables them to positively influence within their households and the wider communities.



*Screenshot from Milan Senior Welfare Organisation Information Session*

Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC) said that this project has helped to tackle COVID19 vaccine hesitancy among the BAME community ELREC works with. Since most minority groups do not speak English, sharing information in their own language has helped to inform and also in building trust, once the service users were receiving the information from a member of their own community.



*Flyer for West Lothian African Women Network event*

West Lothian African Women Network (WLAWN) held a COVID safe event with speakers from the health sector and other experienced community persons to talk over vaccine/testing issues and answering questions. The event helped clarify some of the myths about the vaccine and also encouraged many to take the vaccine if they had not done so already.

The Dhammapadipa Temple increased awareness to the Thai/SE Asian community who have been badly affected by the pandemic and believe this activity supported those with doubts who were apprehensive about getting the vaccine.

Handicabs (Lothian) said drivers would take people to the vaccination centre and wait for them at the door. This provided a lot of comfort as drivers reassured nervous passengers, spoke with them and had a laugh to try and calm their anxieties about going out and getting the vaccine.

*"Thank you so much for taking me for my first vaccine this afternoon. I was so nervous but my driver was lovely and walked me to door of EICC and made sure I was ok. It was so reassuring to see him there afterwards too. This was my first journey to somewhere I don't know without my friends in years!"*

Feedback from a Handicabs passenger.

Positive Help Edinburgh said that the ability to provide safe, supportive transport and advice to service users regarding the COVID-19 vaccine meant that more people were physically able to attend, as without transport and assistance, they would not have made the journey. For their service users living with HIV and/or Hepatitis-C means living with a compromised immune system, so it is of vital importance that the community is protected against COVID-19.

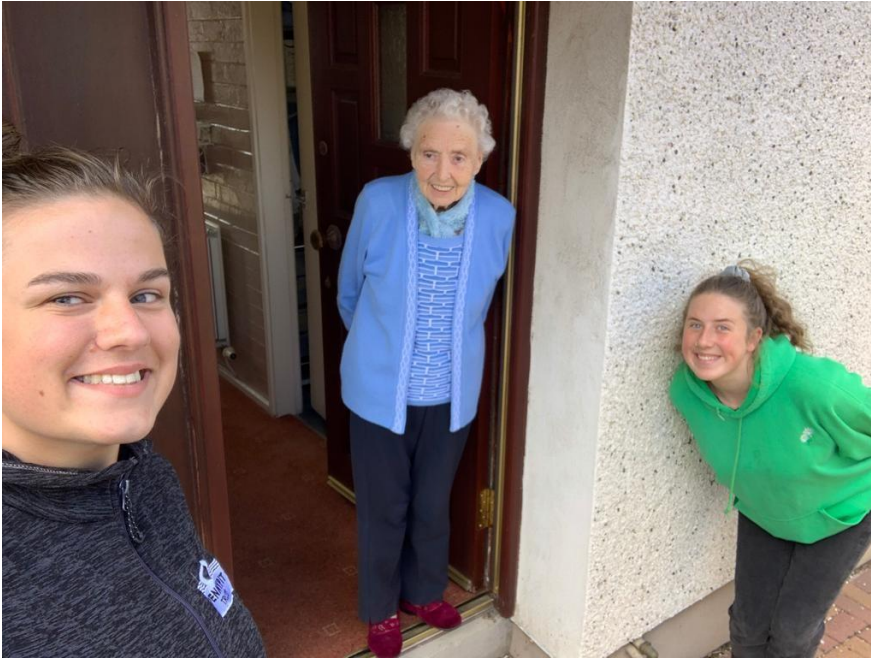


*Photograph of a Handicabs passenger after receiving the COVID vaccination*



03 December 2021

This funding allowed the Pennypit Community Development Trust to sit down with the elderly community and answer any questions they had about the vaccine. Eventually accompanying them to the centres which made a fundamental difference.



Photograph of a Pennypit Community Development Trust service user who was supported through the grant

Deaf Action said the creation of BSL videos had a positive impact as the deaf community were able to access vital information during the pandemic, this was valuable considering the lack of BSL resources available regarding COVID19.

Euan's Guide produced a newsletter and social media material for people with disabilities, their friends, families and carers highlighting positive vaccination experiences. Volunteer reviews shared their experiences of having the vaccination to encourage and give confidence to other disabled people.



Euan's Guide social media activity

## Appendix 1: Activities

- (A) Reproducing materials/post (e.g. printing and mailing public health information leaflets)
- (B) Contribution to a newsletter (e.g. staff time, printing)
- (C) Interpretation and translation costs (written or oral)
- (D) Transport costs to and from vaccination/testing centres
- (E) Contributions to staff time for supporting individual clients (talking over vaccine/testing issues, answering questions, accompanying to vaccination/testing centres)  
(doing follow-up welfare visits after vaccination, supporting people to report LFT results online)
- (F) COVID safe 'events' in person or online for supporting groups of clients (talking over vaccine/testing issues, answering questions)
- (G) Other idea

## Appendix 2: Awarded Grants

Organisation	Amount	Geographical Spread	Activities
1. Bright Light Relationship Counselling	£500.00	Edinburgh	G*
2. Carers of West Lothian	£500.00	West Lothian	A, B, E, F
3. Dads Work	£500.00	East Lothian	D, E, F
4. Deaf Action	£500.00	Lothian-wide	C, E
5. East Lothian Young Carers	£500.00	East Lothian	A, E
6. Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC)	£500.00	Lothian-wide	A, B, C, D, E
7. Euan's Guide	£500.00	Edinburgh	B, G**
8. FAIR Advice	£500.00	Edinburgh	B, E
9. Forth Sector	£92.68	Edinburgh	D
10. Four Square	£100.00	Edinburgh	D
11. Full Options	£500.00	Midlothian	A, C, D, E, F
12. Handicabs	£500.00	Lothian-wide	D
13. Milan Senior Welfare Organisation	£500.00	Edinburgh	B, C, F
14. Open Door Accommodation Project	£500.00	West Lothian	D
15. Positive Help Edinburgh	£500.00	Edinburgh	D, E
16. Positive Help Edinburgh	£500.00	Edinburgh	D, E
17. Queens Love Foundation	£500.00	Edinburgh	F
18. Queens Love Foundation	£500.00	Edinburgh	F
19. Real Life Options	£500.00	Lothian-wide	A, B, D, E, F
20. Real Life Options	£500.00	Lothian-wide	A, B, D, E, F
21. SCOREscotland	£500.00	Edinburgh	A, C, E, F
22. Starcatchers	£500.00	Edinburgh	E, F
23. Support in Mind Scotland	£500.00	Edinburgh	D, E
24. The Dhammapadipa Temple	£500.00	Edinburgh	C, E, F
25. The Pennypit Community Development Trust	£500.00	East Lothian	A, E
26. The Ridge	£500.00	East Lothian	D, E
27. Upward Mobility (UpMo)	£500.00	Lothian-wide	A, E
28. West Lothian African Women Network (WLAWN)	£500.00	West Lothian	F
29. WHALE Arts	£500.00	Edinburgh	A, C, D, E
30. WHALE Arts	£500.00	Edinburgh	D, E
31. The Dhammapadipa Temple	£500.00	Edinburgh	C, E, F

\* Professional counselling session support for people who need emotional help to be able to go and get the vaccine or need help after receiving it.

\*\* Social media activity highlighting positive vaccination experiences by disabled people, their friends, family and carers.