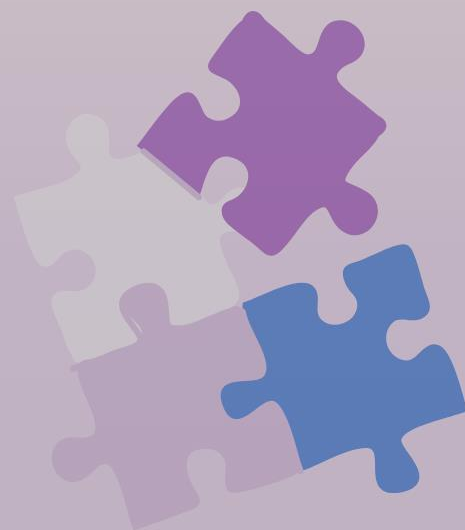


The David Doig Foundation Fund Report 2022-2024



Foundation
Scotland

At a glance.....



AWARDS SINCE FUND
LAUNCH IN 2018:
48



AMOUNT AWARDED
SINCE FUND LAUNCH:
£126,145



NUMBER OF AWARDS IN
LAST TWO YEARS:
16



AMOUNT AWARDED IN
LAST TWO YEARS:
£53,429



ORGS SUPPORTED IN
LAST TWO YEARS:
14



NUMBER OF LIVE
GRANTS
4

Introduction

The David Doig Foundation believes that *‘access to education should be available to everyone regardless of their circumstances, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to achieve their true potential.’*

This report provides an overview of the last two years of activity for the fund – and demonstrates how the Foundation continues to champion young people through projects that develop their confidence, skills and aspirations for the future.

Thanks to the awards made by this Foundation, now in its seventh year of grant making activity, young people are being supported to stay on a positive pathway towards qualifications and employment.

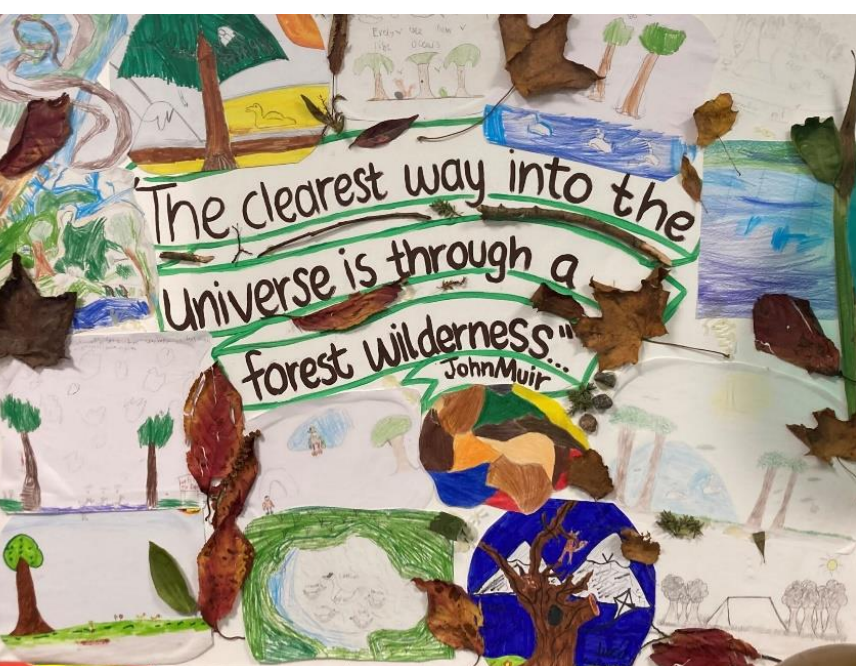
Foundation Scotland is privileged to be facilitating this important work - thank you!



Highlights

In the past year, the Foundation has stopped receiving applications from new organisations, and is instead focusing its support on existing grantees - strengthening the relationship and support to these community groups and ensuring sustainability of their valuable initiatives.

New grants were awarded to two previously funded organisations, **Positive Help** and **Sustainable Communities Initiatives**, and multi-year grants were made to both **YouthLink Scotland** and Scotland's Rural Colleges (**SRUC**).



YouthLink has successfully engaged a core group of P7s with their Natural Leaders program and is now in its second year of the project.

Natural Leaders is a youth-led approach to Learning for Sustainability that is being piloted by youth work teams in North Lanarkshire, Perth and Kinross and West Lothian, offering enhanced support for primary to secondary transitions.

Following a project visit in November 2023, it is clear that the young people involved are feeling empowered and motivated by the workshops taking place. Young people have fed back to **YouthLink** that they are building skills and relationships that support their wellbeing and learning. Feedback from schools confirms that the programme so far has had a positive impact on young people's confidence, skills and learning engagement.

In April 2024, Foundation Scotland joined Gillian and the team at **SRUC** to discuss progress with their student-led peer support programme and the 'Going Further' Bursary.

The programme builds on a volunteer project piloted during Covid, and the new model funded by the David Doig Foundation now pays the Student Leaders for their time and effort delivering this program of support. Although some positive outcomes were shared, the team did confirm that regrettably the recipient of the Bursary in this first year has now moved on and left the course for personal reasons.

Alongside this recruitment for the paid positions was challenging, and they experienced a slower uptake of students than they had hoped.

During the April meeting however, **SRUC** was able to clearly convey how they have evaluated some of the challenges faced in this first year – and crucially, laid out their plans to adapt.

At the heart of this new plan is listening and responding to the students themselves, who have told them that a peer-support program based across each campus (as opposed to aligned with a specific course) would be far more beneficial, and likely to reach more students in need of support.

Thanks to this thoughtful learning and reasoning, it has been agreed by the David Doig Foundation that the project will shift in year two in response to student feedback, and the small underspend (as a result of not recruiting a fourth paid post) will be put towards training costs to better support the student leaders.

This is a really positive step forward, and Foundation Scotland is excited to report back on progress made following this change.

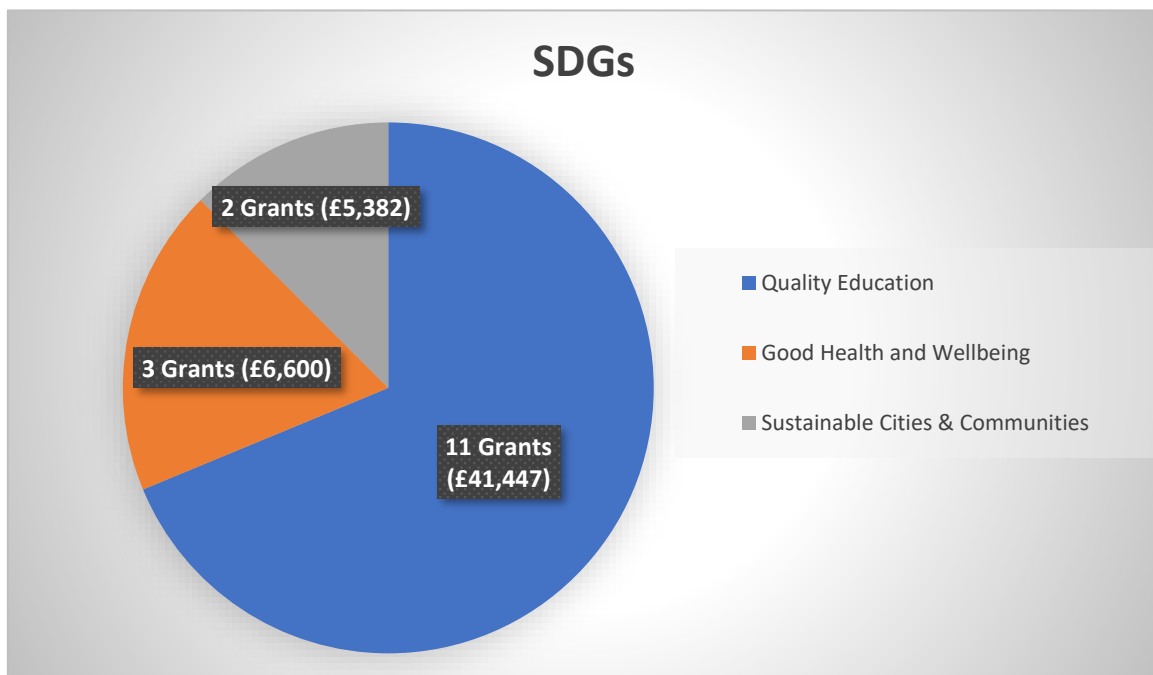
Making a Difference

To measure the positive impact which Fund monies are having both globally and locally, the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are used to identify the main benefits each project or activity supports.

Looking back at the last two years, the projects supported by the David Doig Foundation group under three SDGs: Quality Education, Good Health and Wellbeing and Sustainable Cities & Communities.

Arguably all awards could sit under the SDG for Quality Education, however in cases where there were key additional outcomes for the project then an alternative SDG was selected.

For example, Karele Ltd was funded to deliver a new early intervention programme that supports young people with personal development, mental health and wellbeing using Equine Facilitated Activities and Learning (EFAL) – this was assigned the SDG of Good Health and Wellbeing.



To find out more about how Foundation Scotland is using Sustainable Development Goals to measure impact please see our website here: [Our commitment to the SDGs | Foundation Scotland](#)

Looking specifically at the age range of beneficiaries, we can see that the David Doig Foundation's awards have benefited young people across various age groups evenly: 35% were aged 5-12, 35% were aged 13-18 and 30% were aged 19-25.

It's inspiring to see the Foundation's support making an impact across such a wide range of ages and intervention points.



Case Study – OutLET: Play Resource CIC

In South Lanarkshire, OutLET: Play Resource CIC was awarded a grant of £1,986 to deliver SOARing Outdoors - its Outdoor Alternative Education programme. This weekly programme is designed for young people struggling to cope in traditional school environments due to challenges like poor mental health, additional support needs, and developmental trauma.

Six young people aged 10-16 benefitted from the 16-week project, which combined nature-based learning with therapeutic support to build confidence, self-esteem, and resilience.



Activities such as den building, fire lighting, and safe use of tools were integrated with the aim of achieving the Forest and Outdoor Learning Award (FOLA). Despite initial challenges with attendance due to the significant social anxiety experienced by the group, the programme adapted to the needs of the young people and this resulted in improved engagement and emerging friendships.

By the end, four participants achieved their FOLA qualification, with continued support for the remaining two.

Crucial to the programme's success was the engagement with families, alleviating pressures and fostering a supportive environment. This holistic approach not only facilitated individual growth but also promoted a respect for nature and environmental conservation.

Building on this success, OutLET has secured further funding and partnerships, aiming to expand SOARing Outdoors to reach more young people in North Lanarkshire and beyond, ensuring continued positive impacts on their lives and education.

“Simon really struggled to attend for the first few sessions, due to severe social anxiety. Staff worked patiently with him within his comfort zone, including meeting him and his dad at the site outwith the sessions. After 3 weeks, he started attending, although needed his dad to stay nearby initially. After a few weeks, he was attending regularly, and staff observed that he seemed happy and content, was interacting positively with his peers and was starting to build friendships. Dad has told us he is now attending other social clubs, such as his local Universal Connections.”

Case Study - Lucky Ewe

In partnership with Windward Education, Lucky Ewe was funded by the David Doig Foundation to run an accredited pre-entry Rural Skills Course Level 4 for seven interns aged 15 to 18.

This comprehensive programme included practical skills in sheep handling, husbandry, tree planting, and fencing, conducted at Bonnyton and Fleecefaulds Farms.



Five theory sessions, exploring careers in farming and agriculture, were also held at SRUC Elmwood campus in Cupar.

Despite storms disrupting initial practical sessions and some learners dropping out of the project early on, the programme achieved a 60% success rate.

This success is particularly noteworthy given the challenges, and the lack of previous hands-on experience of the young people that took part. Moving forward, Lucky Ewe plans to better integrate future candidates to enhance their preparedness and engagement from the beginning.

The impending changes at SRUC Elmwood campus is said to be a significant setback for the organisation as they will lose their current base, but Lucky Ewe remains committed to continuing the successful course.

Plans are underway to secure new land through Community Asset Transfer, which will eventually house an Agricultural Learning Centre and ensure a dedicated space for future learning.

Stacey is 16 and lives with her Mum in East Fife. She has been selectively mute since nursery. She won't talk to strangers or in any uncomfortable social situation. Stacey did not go to secondary school - she was a non-attender and left with no qualifications. She now has a place at college one day per week but says, 'it is not brilliant. They just put me in and leave me to get on, but I need more help'. Stacey has been attending Lucky Ewe since Autumn 2023 and participated on the SCQF Rural Skills level 4 with Lucky Ewe and Windward Education.

Stacey said, 'I like Lucky Ewe because I wasn't forced to talk there and didn't get rushed, so I had time to get more confident. The plus points of being on SCQF are meeting nice people, improving physical skills like sawing and hammering. I like working with the sheep because they make me feel calm. The course has helped me because it has given me a qualification and more social connection.' Stacey now talks to Lucky Ewe interns and the staff she knows. She will gain the full award from SQA - SCQF level 4 Rural Skills - in July. Stacey is now moving to a Saturday placement at Lucky Ewe, for those who have 'come through' the service, but still want to come along as a volunteer.

Case Study - Positive Help

In February 2023, the David Doig Foundation generously provided a £2,460 grant to Positive Help's Study Buddy service, which supports children affected by HIV and/or Hepatitis C in Edinburgh and the Lothians.



This programme offers one-to-one study sessions between children and trained volunteers, fostering confidence and essential life skills to help them engage with learning and stay on track at school.

The grant enabled Positive Help to deliver 194 sessions, benefiting 10 children. The programme's success is evident, with 86% of children feeling more positive about their future, and 100% of parents reporting improved school engagement and academic skills.

Despite challenges like volunteer turnover and children's individual mental health issues, the programme adapted by recruiting and training new volunteers and focusing on strengthening family relationships. This year, more parents permitted school collaboration, improving the support system for each child.

This had always been a challenge in the past, with many parents not feeling comfortable sharing their or their child's HIV/Hepatitis C status due to fear of discrimination.

This meant that schoolteachers did not have the full picture or background of the challenges the young person was facing. Thanks to the grant from the David Doig Foundation, the Children's Services Co-ordinator has played a vital role in relationship building between children, families and schools.

Positive Help has built up trust, and families are starting to feel comfortable with working together to provide children with the wrap-around support they need.

Sarah is an 11-year-old from Edinburgh with asthma and dyslexia, whose mother is an adult service user at Positive Help. Sarah was struggling with school due to frequent absences and low confidence, and her mum referred her for the study buddy project.

In May 2023, Positive Help matched her with Study Buddy Jill, who used Sarah's interests to re-engage her in learning. Jill supported Sarah through her dyslexia diagnosis, using effective techniques and fun tasks to build her confidence in reading, writing, and spelling. Sarah's willingness to write and participate in school activities has significantly improved, reflecting her growing self-esteem. Her teacher and mother have both noted a positive change in her attitude, learning, and attendance.

Case Study - Move On

In response to the needs of young people during the ongoing cost of living crisis, Move On was funded by the David Doig Foundation to hold a series of evening activity sessions at their Edinburgh and Glasgow offices.

These sessions, primarily attended by participants of the mentoring programme, also welcomed young people from the employability services or those who had completed their mentoring journey. The sessions provided a safe and supportive space for young people to socialise and engage in activities chosen by them, with staff support.



In Glasgow, eight young people participated in drop-in sessions, including creative writing, board games, and crafting evenings. The activities aimed to build confidence and foster connections among participants. Essential hygiene products were discreetly available, and nutritious vegetarian food was provided.

In Edinburgh, four young people attended the sessions, contributing to the creation of a more welcoming office environment. They implemented a staff photo board, ordered bean bags and fidget toys, and updated the Health and Wellbeing Toolkit, a resource designed by and for young people. Engaging young people from the start and empowering them to design and develop the sessions proved highly effective. 67% reported back that they felt an increase in self-esteem and confidence, and 100% reported improved mental health and wellbeing.

Future plans from the organisation include establishing a 'Peer Champions' group to enhance volunteer mentor training and youth engagement, ensuring the services remain welcoming and trauma informed.

Looking Forward

Currently there are four live grants for this fund, with two new awards already made in 2024. It is expected that all final monitoring reports, as well as the interim report from SRUC, should be received by April 2025 – Foundation Scotland will therefore provide the fund with its next Impact report in May of next year.

As discussed, the intention of the David Doig Foundation now is to spend down the current balance of the fund over the next couple of years by supporting existing grantees. Alongside the multi-year commitment to SRUC (£3,200 per year) the Foundation expects to make two additional awards in 2025, and two in 2026.

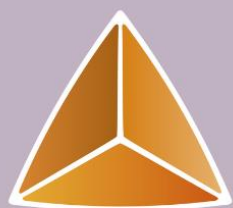
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