

WEST MIDLANDS FUNDERS NETWORK
ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2023

LEARNING FROM THE PANDEMIC

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

MIDLANDS ARTS CENTRE (MAC BIRMINGHAM)
TUESDAY 27 JUNE 2023 10AM - 4PM

PROGRAMME MAY BE
SUBJECT TO CHANGE

V2. MAY 2023

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WMFN Annual
Conference

 Birmingham
27 June 2023

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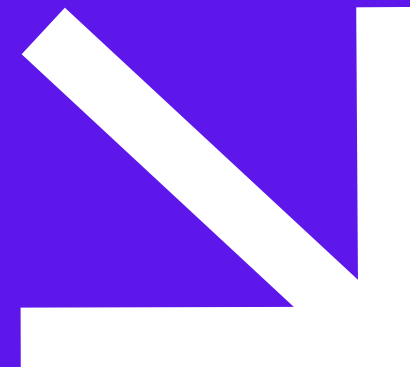
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About West Midlands Funders Network

West Midlands Funders Network is the only cross-sector membership network for people and organisations who give funding to communities in the West Midlands.

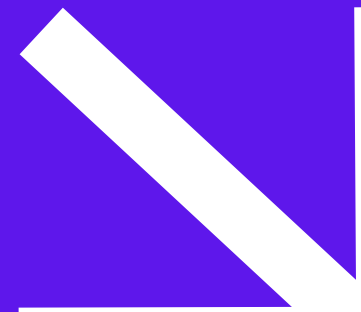
We work with independent trusts and foundations, public sector bodies, local authorities, lottery funders and corporate and social investors, helping them to use their resources effectively to support local communities in the region. This means we help our members ensure that funding meets the needs of local people and that resources get to the places where they are needed most and can have the most impact.

We support funders to engage in everything from regular events and seminars to facilitating projects for collaboration, learning and data analysis and good practice and intelligence sharing.

For more information please visit wmfn.org.uk



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ABOUT OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2023

The unprecedented period between 2020 and 2022 during the global COVID-19 pandemic resulted in swift and effective action from funders, the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) and wider stakeholders in response to the crisis. As the pandemic years lengthened, the response changed from emergency to recovery. Funders forged ways of delivering money and resources to communities quickly, through emergency grant-making, swifter and flexible processes, and collaboration between funders and local organisations.

Short-term funding programmes have developed to help communities through the extended recovery. As the West Midlands continues to emerge from the pandemic, the implications of looming recession, a cost of living crisis, racial inequalities, the climate emergency and rising socio-economic inequalities continue to have a profound impact on the lives of those living and working in our region. What does all of this mean for the future of funding? And where can long term, focussed funding make a significant impact in the years ahead?

Join us as we discuss all of this, and much more, at West Midlands Funders Network Annual Conference 2023.

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MORNING PROGRAMME

Timings	Programme Listing
10.00 AM	Arrivals & Registration
10.30 AM	Chair's Welcome & Introductions
10.35 AM	Session 1: Setting the context for what we have learnt so far about the impact of the pandemic on the Third Sector Mandy Wilson, Associate Researcher, Uni of Birmingham Eliza Buckley, Director of Research, IVAR Leonie Yeend, Funding and Groups Development Officer, WCAVA Brian Carr, Chief Executive, BVSC Stuart Ashmore, Deputy Chief Executive, SCVO Vicky Hines, Chief Executive, One Walsall
11.55 AM	Intermission for workshops / room changes
12.00 PM	Session 2: Morning Breakout Workshops Workshop A: Innovation in practice and programme delivery Workshop B: Relationships between stakeholders Workshop C: Racial equity Workshop D: New patterns of funding
12.45 PM	Intermission: return to main room
1.00 PM	Workshop Feedback, Responses and Q&A
1.15 PM	Lunch & Market Hall Networking



AFTERNOON PROGRAMME

Timings	Programme Listing
2.15 PM	Session 3: Afternoon Breakout Workshops Workshop E: Inequalities with a focus on cost-of-living Workshop F: Children, young people and families Workshop G: Health Inequalities: Mental Health and Wellbeing Workshop H: State of the Sector: Third Sector Capacity & Resilience
3.00 PM	Intermission: return to main room & refreshments
3.05 PM	Workshop Feedback, Responses and Q&A
3.25 PM	Closing Remarks: Mandy Wilson, Associate Researcher, University of Birmingham
3.45 PM	Thank you & Conference Evaluations
4.00 PM	Conference Closes


PROGRAMME SESSION SUMMARIES

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SESSION 1

 10.35 AM - 12.00PM

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT SO FAR ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THE THIRD SECTOR

Session 1 will provide an overview of key learnings from the period of the COVID-19 pandemic drawing on research about the Third Sector response in the West Midlands. The session will also look at the current landscape and the immediate future for the Third Sector as well as considering the social, economic and cultural context. Contributors will touch on changes to volunteering trends (including post-pandemic fatigue); changes to employment trends, particularly across the 50yrs+ age group; changes to working practices, eg. remote, virtual and digital capacity, and the capability and resilience of the sector and the communities they work with.

IVAR will share the impact of the pandemic years on grant-makers as well as the key learnings that funders should be working towards in their approach, operations and work practices (drawn from 8 practices of open and trusting approaches to funding.)

CONTRIBUTORS

Mandy Wilson, Associate Researcher, Uni of Birmingham
Eliza Buckley, Director of Research, IVAR
Leonie Yeend, Funding and Groups Development Officer, WCAVA
Brian Carr, Chief Executive, BVSC
Stuart Ashmore, Deputy Chief Executive, SCVO
Vicky Hines, Chief Executive, One Walsall
Tina Costello, Chief Executive, Heart of England Community Foundation (Moderator)

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SESSION 2

 12.00 PM - 1.15PM

MORNING BREAKOUT WORKSHOPS INCLUDING FEEDBACK, RESPONSES & Q&A

The morning workshops will explore key learnings and insights from the pandemic response and recovery including changes in programme, policy and practice as well as the relationships between specific groups and stakeholders.

WORKSHOP A

Innovation in work practices and programme delivery

Sharing experiences and insights on changes in funding programme design, development and delivery with a focus on the application stage, assessment stage and evaluation stage.

CONTRIBUTORS

Heart of England Community Foundation
BBC Children in Need
National Lottery Community Fund
Birmingham Voluntary Service Council

WORKSHOP B

Relationships between stakeholders

Exploring changes in relationships between funders, grant recipients and wider stakeholders including approaches towards open and trusting relationships and what are the key influences in funders' risk management and appetite towards risk.

CONTRIBUTORS

Heritage Lottery Fund
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
National Lottery Community Fund
Sandwell Council for Voluntary Organisations

WORKSHOP C

Racial equity

Exploring the key actions that Black and minority ethnic-led organisations want funders to take to improve racial equity in accessing funding and meeting the needs of the BAME communities across the West Midlands.

CONTRIBUTORS

Birmingham Race Impact Group (BRIG)
brap Birmingham
Birmingham City Council
Stephna Legacy Foundation
Shakti Women
One Walsall

WORKSHOP D

New patterns of funding

IVAR to share examples of funding approaches for unrestricted funding, examples of funding programme with co-design and co-production, and how funders are going beyond money-using their assets, power and status to support the Third Sector.

CONTRIBUTORS

TBC

SESSION 3

 2.15PM - 3.05PM

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT WORKSHOPS INCLUDING FEEDBACK, RESPONSES & Q&A

The afternoon workshops will focus on the short-to-medium term regional issues facing the Third Sector and communities in the West Midlands. We will explore how funders can build upon good practice in open and trusting approaches and how we can overcome the challenges of planning ahead in uncertain times

WORKSHOP E

Inequalities with a focus on cost-of-living

Sharing and exploring the impact of the pandemic and the cost of living implications for socio-economic equalities in the West Midlands. Exploring specifically the key needs of service users and the capacity required by anti-poverty organisations to address those needs.

CONTRIBUTORS

TBC

WORKSHOP F

Children, young people and families

Exploring the experiences of specialist youth organisations across the region during the pandemic and the recovery from the pandemic, including where there are gaps in addressing the issues facing youth provision that funders need to consider.

CONTRIBUTORS

West Midlands Youth Focus

WORKSHOP G

Health Inequalities: Mental Health and Wellbeing

Exploring how the impact of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis has increased mental health issues across the region, with perspectives from Mental Health organisations as well as public sector providers as well as wider Third Sector responses, gaps and challenges.

CONTRIBUTORS

Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board
Solihull Metropolitan Public Health
Black Country Mental Health (tbc)

WORKSHOP H

State of the Sector: Third Sector Capacity & Resilience

Exploring the current state of the sector in the West Midlands, with a particular focus on the challenges facing small to medium size organisations, changes in volunteering and changes across the Third Sector workforce including recruitment and retention of staff as well as diversity and representation.

CONTRIBUTORS

Birmingham Voluntary Service Council
Sandwell Council for Voluntary Organisations
Warwickshire Community & Voluntary Action
One Walsall
Birmingham Community Matters



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