

CULTURAL SHIFT

S O U T H E A S T

Newsletter

October 2007

Cultural Shift South East Conference 2007: Multiplying the social enterprise effect - 16 November 2007

Issue 5

The second annual Cultural Shift South East Conference will take place on Friday 16 November 2007, at the Ark Centre in Basingstoke.

This will be a 'one stop' watershed event for social enterprise advocates in the South East and beyond.

Discover how social enterprise can grow by:

- Creating new partnerships
- Delivering on regional challenges
- Providing innovative training on social enterprise advice and social impact mapping
- Finding new approaches to investment
- Connecting local, regional and national support
- Creating a cultural shift across sectors

This event, held in association with UnLtd, will also mark the inception of a new region-wide partnership for social enterprise support.



For further details and to book your place, please go to www.culturalshift.com or contact Christine Gomm on 01483 470 178 or christinegomm@seeda.co.uk



Demonstration Projects Update

HMP Stanford Hill: Genesis Project by Lee Parekh*

Having left Stanford Hill in August, I have continued to work for NACRO, the crime reduction charity in London. I am still currently involved with the Genesis Project at Stanford Hill. Since leaving Stanford Hill, I have had several job offers, including one from a finance organisation and another from an IT trading firm in London, which still await my decision. I have gained tremendous knowledge working within the public sector through Stanford Hill, and in a "weird" way, I was upset leaving Stanford Hill, being there helped me to be the person I am today.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank several people at Stanford Hill; Mr Keiron Taylor, the Governing Governor, Ms Penny Hughes, Deputy Governor, Governor Ramzi Bahrawy, Governor Iain Afrin, Faye Webb Personal Secretary to the Governors, Senior Officer Sean Talbot, Kathryn Prentice, Head of Environmental Services, Kirsty Shiel, EO Genesis Project, Officer Simon Derry and Chrissy Derry, the Governor's Support Team and several other Prison Officers at Stanford Hill who have helped me through my journey. Without the humanity, dignity and decency of these people, I would not be in the position I am today.

I have also been requested to host a speech at the Home Office in early December on Age Discrimination within the Prison Service, which I am very much looking forward to. I would also like to thank SEEDA for allowing me to express my thoughts and experience through the Cultural Shift South East Newsletter.

For further information about the Genesis Project, please contact Kirsty Shiel: kirsty.shiel@hmps.gsi.gov.uk

*Lee Parekh is a Member of the Genesis Project Enterprise Board and a Cultural Shift South East Programme Beneficiary.

The Really Helpful IT Company

ILM Training Programme by John Hill, IT Engineer

After a long career as a musician in the Royal Marines Band Service, I was not looking forward to the prospect of starting all over again at the end of my contract. Job opportunities for an ex-military band trombonist seemed few and far between. I decided to change my career path and return to a field I had been interested in since I was at school, computers.

Ever since PC's became widely available, I had been interested in how they worked and what they could be used for. I had no formal training apart from 'O' and 'A' level computer science, which I gained studying machines current in the early 80's, and an ECDL Users Certificate from several years ago. Due to the pace of technological advances, these exam passes would be of little use to me while seeking an IT job in 2007, so I took advantage of the military resettlement scheme to train further. I attended a six week long residential course earlier this year aiming to achieve Microsoft Certification in current desktop and server operating system software, (Windows XP Professional and Microsoft Server 2003).

I passed seven exams to gain MCSE status and started looking for employment. Although I had no commercial experience, I now had an industry-recognised professional qualification and was confident that I would have no trouble finding work. I was a little disappointed with the initial response, or lack of it, to my first few applications but became more encouraged when I was called for interview at The Really Helpful IT Company (TRHITC). The issue of experience had been a more important factor than I had at first anticipated.

TRHITC was able to offer me a six month contract through the Cultural Shift South East Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) Programme, during which time I will receive practical training to complement the certifications I have already earned. This seemed a great way to address the 'Catch 22' situation I found myself in: needing experience to get a job but not being able to gain experience until I had a job. I accepted the offer and began work/training in August 2007.

I have now worked for approximately one month and covered a wide variety of IT support tasks. I've been shadowing more senior engineers at TRHITC and also spending two days per week with the IT department at 'Southern Focus Trust' in North End, Portsmouth, to gain further work experience. I've learned about hardware, software and network problems and how to solve them. I've rebuilt PC's from components, reinstalled operating systems and applications, investigated Internet and network connection problems, installed network infrastructure: switches, routers, ADSL filters and server based printers. I've learned how to configure mobile email devices and have performed several user changes involving 'Hard Resets' and complete reconfigurations.

I've also learned about different ways of setting up workstations to cater for specific situations and tasks, e.g. using group policy to lock down the options on a machine available to vulnerable adults and young children to prevent inappropriate use; installing specialist accessibility software such as 'Supernova', which customises a PC for use by someone with impaired vision; and different ways to deliver help: via telephone, email or remotely connecting to another PC and directly solving problems on a machine many miles away. Another aspect of the job is helping users to carry out day to day tasks with their installed software.

I believe the ILM Programme is an ideal opportunity for me to become a more rounded and experienced IT engineer, and I am sure it will vastly improve my job prospects when I come to the end of my current contract and look for a more permanent position.

Best Net:gain Newcomer by Paula Graham, Customer Services and Training Manager

The Really Helpful IT Company was delighted to hear that it had been named as the Best Net:gain Newcomer at an awards ceremony on 28 June 2007.

Through TRHITC's work in delivering IT training at community centres across Havant, Hampshire. The Really Helpful IT Company registered as a UK online centre. TRHITC has also recently been successful in a consortia bid for funding to develop this work and deliver more UK online activity to particular target groups, to help bridge the social and digital divide and make a difference to the people in the local community. As a UK online centre and social enterprise, TRHITC registered as a new Net:gain centre in March 2007 and has successfully run three 'Pathfinder' workshops for voluntary and community organisations covering ICT strategy and planning. These organisations are also members of Net:gain, which is funded by Capacitybuilders under ChangeUp.

TRHITC is the only new Net:gain Centre to have achieved this during the centre development funding period. It has also now been granted facilitator approval and a licence to continue to deliver Net:gain to voluntary and community organisations in Hampshire.

Picture below: Paula Graham, receiving the award for the Best Net:gain Centre Newcomer Award on behalf of The Really Helpful IT Company



For further information, please contact:
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National and Regional News

Risk Capital Investment Fund for Social Enterprise*



CabinetOffice
Office of the **Third Sector**

The Office of the Third Sector is currently consulting on a risk capital investment fund for social enterprise. In the Social Enterprise Action Plan published in November 2006, the Government committed itself to working with the finance and social enterprise sectors, to develop a scheme that improves the ability of social enterprises to access the finance they need, when seeking to expand their businesses.

As part of that work, the Office of the Third Sector is allocating £10 million to help address the equity gap faced by social enterprises when trying to expand, by creating a 'Pathfinder Fund'. Under the proposed structure for the scheme, the Government will invest in a social enterprise through the fund if the terms it is offered are the same or better than those offered to independent sector investors. The main purpose of the consultation is to gather further evidence to strengthen the case that social enterprises encounter an equity gap when looking to expand their businesses, and to give individuals a chance to comment on the proposed structure of the investment fund.

Questions in the consultation include:

- From your experience, do you believe there are particular issues facing social enterprises in accessing equity financing?
- Are venture capitalists focusing their interest on relatively established businesses, resulting in smaller younger businesses being left behind?
- Are potential investors in the fund willing to invest on purely commercial terms?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Government appointing one fund manager to run one large fund rather than several fund managers to run several smaller funds?
- What are the key factors that should be considered when evaluating whether there has been a successful development of equity funding instruments for investing in social enterprises?

The full list of questions is available in the consultation document and can be downloaded from:

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/consultations/current/risk.asp

The consultation closes on Friday 2 November 2007.

For questions regarding the consultation or to respond to the consultation, please email riskcapital@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk or write to:

Justine da Palma Vieira
Office of the Third Sector
2nd Floor
35 Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BQ

*Source: Cabinet Office - Office of the Third Sector, www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector

West Sussex Support Programme for Social Enterprises - The Social Enterprise Innovation Award 2007- 08

The West Sussex Social Enterprise Steering Group (WSSESG), with support from West Sussex County Council is running an award to promote and support innovative ideas amongst potential, emerging and established social enterprises and entrepreneurs in West Sussex.

Organisations based in West Sussex are invited to submit proposals for innovative business ideas that can benefit the community and/or the environment.

There is an award of £5,000 for the winner. The award must be used to develop the idea into a business with clear and demonstrable social objectives.

What WSSESG is looking for:

WSSESG expect business models that show innovative ways to produce something or to provide a service. The ideas submitted will have to demonstrate they can be developed into a business that benefits the community and/or the environment.

Participants can submit several application forms containing different ideas.

Applicants are expected to fully explain how their idea will work as a business including:

- What it is
- How it will be profitable
- How it will be financed
- Evidence of the gap or need in the market
- Population groups to be served by the service or products
- How you will engage with your target client group
- What it will cost to develop and implement
- Who is to be involved and what they will be doing
- Why the service or product is innovative

Completed forms should be received by the organisers by 16 November 2007.

Who is eligible?

The following are eligible as long as they are based in West Sussex:

- Social Enterprises
- Organisations from the community and voluntary sector as long as the idea is to be developed as a social enterprise
- Organisations from the private sector as long as any profits from the innovative product or service are invested back to fulfil clear social objectives
- Individuals, as long as the idea is to be developed as a social enterprise. Individuals will be required to provide detailed professional references before they receive the award.

About the organisers

The WSSSEG was set up to co-ordinate activity aimed at supporting social enterprise. The group is currently set up on an informal basis and includes organisations from the private, voluntary and public sectors as well as social enterprises.

The two objectives the Steering Group are working towards are:

1. To actively promote social enterprise and what it can accomplish in West Sussex
2. To enable and facilitate an environment where social enterprises are supported and can support each other

For further information, contact Ana Fajardo on 01243 777 606 or ana.fajardo@westsussex.gov.uk



Cultural Shift South East Website

Building upon the excellent work of The Really Helpful IT Company, the Cultural Shift South East Partnership is delighted to announce the re-launch of the Cultural Shift South East Website - www.culturalshift.com

The Website is a 'one stop shop' for all those interested in social enterprise. It contains all the latest developments in the world of social enterprise, both nationally and regionally, as well as details about the Cultural Shift South East Programme. It also provides a signposting service with regards to social enterprise support and funding.

Please send any contributions or comments about the Cultural Shift Website to victoriakeene@seeda.co.uk

Events



2/3 November 2007, Olympia, London*

The Social Entrepreneur Show is a brand new and unique event, to support the growing social enterprise business community.

This new event brings together entrepreneurs in the social enterprise sector with those organisations which can help them to get going ... and to succeed.

At the Social Entrepreneur Show, in one single location you can:

- Meet hundreds of funded and private organisations which can help you
- Seek expert answers to the specific questions you have about your chosen type of company and aspirations
- Choose from a range of seminars covering everything from accessible e-commerce to worldwide ethical banking, and every stop in between
- Register for one-to-one advice on a number of specialist topics
- Review your business plans and ideas with enthusiastic experts
- Hear from people who've tried and tested the theory of starting a social enterprise: learn from their fortunes and failings
- Network with like-minded individuals: forge valuable new business and personal contacts for your new life
- ... and it's all FREE!

If you would like to register for free tickets to the Social Entrepreneur Show, please call free on: 0800 328 0467 or alternatively visit: www.socialentrepreneurshow.co.uk/contactus.asp

*Source: www.socialentrepreneurshow.co.uk/index.asp

Research Team Update by Indianna Minto

With Cultural Shift South East drawing to its close, the Research Team would like to thank the many individuals and organisations who have contributed to the build up of what is turning out to be an extensive body of information on cross-sector partnerships.

As the Team concludes its final report on the Project, some key lessons stand out. Specifically, the information collected provides valuable insights into entrepreneurial partnerships involving the public and voluntary and community sectors (VCS). Some of these will be considered in this penultimate issue.

A key starting point in the observations from the research, is the importance of networks and relationships across organisational boundaries. It is here that resources including knowledge, contacts, funding and legitimacy can be accessed. But while organisations were found to be important, so too was the role played by individuals within the Partnership. Some of these were embedded within specific institutions and at times were wedged in by the confines of their institutional setting. Still there were others who though lodged within a specific institution, were able to negotiate their way easily across different institutional settings introducing innovation and challenging perceived organisational or institutional boundaries. These were important in seeking resources and linking problems with solutions; in essence acting as 'node linkers' or network builders.

Additionally, the balance of power within such partnerships was also important. The study indicates the importance of an empowered approach where the VCS is seen as an active member of the Partnership. Here the VCS (and private sector partners) help to provide a counterweight to the (real or perceived) dominance of the public sector partner allowing for objectives and options to be viewed through much wider lenses.

The experience of the Partners as they sought to form social enterprises, also indicates that the degree to which partnerships are enterprising can be affected by the location of the public sector partner within government. For instance, where the public partner is located in an area which is highly sensitive to public and political opinion, then there is potentially more of an aversion to risk. In turn, the options and objectives of the Partnership may be constrained as business ideas may be limited by the rules governing the operations of the public body and the real or potential level of risks involved in certain undertakings.

The final issue of the Cultural Shift South East Newsletter will deal with some of the other major findings from the fieldwork. These will relate to procurement, the importance of trust, as well as the on going cultural shift which is taking place within the public and VCS sectors through greater interaction across boundaries.

For further information, please contact:
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Pictured above: Indianna Minto, Cultural Shift Research Assistant, Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship

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