

Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Strategy 2020

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Paul Hamlyn was an entrepreneurial publisher and philanthropist, committed to offering new opportunities and experiences for people in need.

During his lifetime, and because of his experiences, he had a strong interest in social justice, challenging prejudice and opening up the arts and education to everyone, particularly young people.

In 1987 he established the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for general charitable purposes.

Since then, the Foundation has continuously supported charitable activities in the UK and in India, enabling people, especially children and young people, to enjoy a better quality of life.

Paul died in August 2001, but his magnificent bequest enables us to be independent and bold in honouring his beliefs and aims.

Our vision

A just society in which everyone, especially young people, can realise their full potential and enjoy fulfilling and creative lives.

Our mission

To be an effective and independent funder, using all our resources to create opportunities and support social change.

We partner with inspiring organisations and individuals to make sure that people facing disadvantage are at the heart of leading change and designing solutions to overcome inequality.

Our values

Collaboration and connection

We believe in the power of working together to achieve a greater impact.

Our aspiration is to capitalise on the connections between the different areas of our grant-making and to build communities that share a common interest. This is about how we work across our team internally and how we connect partners and allies externally. To achieve this, we cultivate awareness and develop deep knowledge of the fields in which we operate.

Trust

Trust is at the heart of strong relationships.

It is hard won and can be easily lost. With trust comes the possibility of collaboration. Without it, the power dynamic between funder and funded can undermine progress towards social change. To build trust we focus on delivering our commitments, and on being resilient and consistent over the long term.

Openness

Openness is key to building trust and enabling collaboration.

We want our processes to be as straightforward and transparent as possible, and we are committed to sharing our data clearly. We welcome feedback and will change the way we work if it is undermining the quality of the relationships we want to create. And we communicate honestly, learning from mistakes and celebrating what works.

Thoughtfulness

Every decision we take has an impact on someone, so we strive to think about others with kindness.

We want to be attentive and careful in exercising judgement and to create the time and space for deep conversations and learning. Being flexible and responsive to the needs of those we fund is critical if we are to demonstrate a thoughtful approach.

Our approach

We want to innovate in our grant-making and to work with our peers to create a contemporary philanthropy that is responsive and flexible.

This means doing things differently and using all our resources to improve our practice. We focus on:

Purposeful and equitable relational grant-making

We want to be more than a transactional funder. To achieve this, we want to work alongside the people and groups we fund, acknowledging their expertise and welcoming their insights, and drawing on them to inform and develop the way we do things. We use a variety of funding approaches, from support for research and development through to endowments, in response to the needs of the organisations we work with and the conditions they face. Our impulse is to be flexible as possible, and we are extending our commitment to long-term funding and to providing core support when it is helpful to do so.

Non-financial support

We believe we can add value to our grant-making and strengthen the organisations that we fund by providing advice and support from within the Foundation and by sourcing external expertise. We commission and invest in research and evaluation to put learning at the heart of everything we do. We underpin advocacy and communications activity to help shift narratives and to add to collective intelligence, and we support skills development and capacity in the sectors we fund. We value networking and relationships, so we support bringing our partners together to work on common agendas.

We own our building in King's Cross, London, and make it available free of charge to past and present grantees when we can. It provides a safe and independent space where our partners can reflect and share learning openly.

Our people

Feedback has shown us how important it is to have skilled and knowledgeable staff and trustees, and how critical the quality of the relationships with them is to everyone who works with us, so we are committed to investing in the professional development of our people. We also recognise that it is important that our trustees, advisors and staff are well informed and have lived experience of the fields in which we operate. These perspectives help our assessment and decision-making processes to feel even more relevant and informed. Diversity in our organisation is not a 'nice-to-have', but a cultural and business imperative.

Partnership and collaboration

To create the change we want to see, it is often effective to work with other groups and organisations besides those we fund. Accordingly, we actively welcome partnerships – with other funders, with central and local government and with business – and build communities of interest in the fields we support. We encourage those we fund to improve their impact and practice by developing their own partnerships locally and nationally.

Effective and efficient operations

We want to achieve the greatest possible impact with our resources and set ourselves high standards for how we operate. We desire simplicity in all our dealings and we are open to new ways of working to help us achieve that. We aim to operate a straightforward, transparent process for those seeking grants from us, and to manage relationships with suppliers and contractors with respect. Our commitment to social justice extends to our practice as an employer and as a Living Wage Funder.

Our investment strategy

Paul Hamlyn Foundation is a registered charity with substantial investment assets that finance our grant-making activities. In managing these assets, the Foundation is a long-term investor, expecting to exist in perpetuity. To achieve this, we need to ensure that environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles inform a responsive investment approach and effective deployment of our endowment.

Social justice

As a result of deep-rooted inequality, many people are excluded from the political, economic and cultural decisions that shape their lives.

This can have detrimental consequences for every aspect of life. It needs to change. Social justice – working towards a just and equitable society – is at the heart of our vision and is the thread that links all our work.

We are committed to diversity, equity and inclusion. We are determined to challenge racism and address the root causes of inequality in everything we do. This means acknowledging the power imbalance inherent in our work and holding ourselves to account. We are responsible for our working culture, the transparency of the decisions we take, how and to whom we distribute funding, and the way in which we develop relationships.

You can read our full Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement [here](#).

We are particularly interested in supporting individuals and organisations that share this commitment, and in funding work that:

Strengthens civil society

Unlike statutory funders, independent foundations can take a long-term view, which means we can take more risks and support work that others find challenging or that requires long-term solutions. With this freedom comes a responsibility to create the best possible environment for the organisations and individuals we support. Sometimes this means working with others to make our resources go further. Sometimes we commission research and activities that build knowledge to help others achieve their vision, and sometimes we step back to reflect and learn. We also complement our support in the fields where we operate with funding to promote sector independence and adaptation.

Supports social innovation

We are interested in finding innovative ways to address long-standing and emerging social issues alongside supporting excellent, ongoing work. We recognise the need to take risks if we want to work in this way and the possibility that not all innovations will succeed. We are keen to build a diversity of networks and relationships, and we recognise that innovation can emerge as easily from people with lived experience, from communities and from non-traditional forms of organising, as it can from established institutions.

Champions people's voice and agency

We want people to have greater control over the decisions that shape their lives. People and groups, especially those facing the greatest challenges, must be at the heart of efforts to design, influence and lead change. We want to support a more diverse group of social, cultural and political leaders for the future. The development of individuals' leadership skills and capabilities are critical to this approach.

Responds to digital transformation

The world increasingly depends on us all being 'digital citizens' who are confident navigating the online environment. This can deliver personal, social and cultural benefits and be a powerful catalyst for change. In funding this future, we are mindful that many are unable to use the benefits that the digital world offers and can feel disconnected. Some of the values and approaches we hold, such as transparency, can also be undermined by digital processes. We are interested in supporting projects that make the most of the opportunities that are opening up, and those that seek to redress the inequalities that the digital world can perpetuate.

Responds to the climate emergency

The scale of the climate threat, and of the solutions needed, means that this is an issue for all parts of civil society and every charitable foundation. Climate change is a health, equality, educational, economic, cultural, scientific, security and local community issue. It is of great concern to children and young people, who are showing bold and effective leadership in this space. Link to Funder Commitment on Climate Change [here](#).

In focusing our resources to have the best possible impact, we have six funding priorities where we wish to see change.

Funding priorities

We anticipate that these funding priorities will run for the lifetime of this strategy.

The ways in which we address them, and the resources we allocate to them, may develop during moments of review and evaluation.

We expect our commitment to social justice will underpin all these priorities.

Investing in young people

Much of our grant-making aims to benefit young people, but it is the groups and organisations who work directly with them who often make the most difference, especially for young people who face complex transitions to adulthood. We concentrate our support on young people who are in the most challenging circumstances: those who are socially excluded or marginalised, whose experiences are hidden or less well known, whose voices are often erased or ignored.

Our aim is to improve the quality and quantity of support available to these young people. We do this by investing in organisations that can expand and improve their impact by developing resources and enhancing delivery.

We want to support organisations at different stages of development to improve, consolidate and spread practices that empower young people to shape their lives and lead change. We look for work with young people that starts by recognising and building on their strengths and potential. We also work with organisations to influence the wider context, advocating for young people and being led by their direct advocacy.

We also support work that is led by young people, where power is shared, where work is developed and delivered in partnership with them, and where youth voice and experience influences decision-making. We have a particular interest in young people leading social change and shaping the world around them.

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“We want to ensure that a wider and more diverse group of people have access to quality artistic practice.”

Migration and integration

Migration is a global phenomenon, generating opportunities for social, economic and cultural enrichment. It also creates challenges for those who have moved or been displaced, and for those facing change in their communities. We have long experience of grant-making, research and collaborations around migration, mainly focused on helping young people for whom migration has brought vulnerability and hardship.

Our view is that societies are more likely to live well together if exclusion is addressed and connections are deepened. We want to use our funding to help build ‘shared ground’, with the aim of a more socially equal society where young people, settled and transient, migrant and British, can contribute actively and engage positively.

Arts access and participation

We believe in the power of the arts as a force for change, and one that enriches people’s lives and communities.

We want to ensure that a wider and more diverse group of people have access to quality artistic practice, both as audiences and participants. Building on our long history of work in this area, we support organisations to test, implement and develop more effective approaches to widening access to and deepening participation in the arts. It is not enough simply to increase numbers – our emphasis is on addressing inequalities of opportunity and the systemic issues that put up barriers to access and participation in the arts.

We are particularly interested in supporting organisations that want to build meaningful relationships with people and communities, and those that prioritise partnership working within the arts and across wider sectors. We aim to enable organisations to build stronger evidence about what works, so that they can better understand and improve their practice, share learning and have greater impact.

Education and learning through the arts

The arts play an important role in enriching young people's learning and educational experiences. Exposure to the arts can unlock potential in young people, helping them to develop skills in communication, collaboration, creativity and problem solving. In addition to the enjoyment and enrichment the arts bring, arts education can increase young people's engagement in school and learning, and support key educational outcomes. For many young people, particularly those experiencing the most disadvantage, the only opportunity to gain access to arts education is at school.

Where good practice exists in schools, colleges and the arts organisations that work with them, the benefits for young people are significant. This is where we focus our grant-making and learning.

There is an appetite for collaboration between teachers and arts organisations, and for them to explore and improve their practice and the outcomes for young people. We are particularly interested in supporting such partnerships. We also respond to teachers' interest in having more opportunities to develop their skills and professional practice in teaching through the arts, and in understanding their pivotal role in creating and delivering an arts-rich curriculum and school environment.

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Nurturing ideas and people

Social change often comes about because of the application of good ideas by passionate people. Our founder was an innovator: in his business life and philanthropy, he backed people with good ideas. We want to do this, too.

Individuals in the UK have limited opportunities to access the financial support that is needed to scope and develop ideas to achieve social change. We are interested in backing ideas at the earliest stages of development, particularly from people who may not have much experience of applying for or receiving funding, but merit backing.

Believing that a healthy civic society is one where artists thrive, we support composers and visual artists to have the freedom to develop creatively and to grow personally and professionally.

A vibrant arts ecology requires not only great artists, but also talented and visionary people with the drive and vision to make change happen. For over ten years we have offered responsive and flexible support to creative leaders and entrepreneurs, giving them the chance to make their mark across art forms and genres.

Creating opportunities for people and communities in India

Paul Hamlyn recognised that people and communities in India had inherent strengths that were often overlooked, particularly when living in challenging circumstances. We have been working there since 1992, and it is the only place we fund outside of the UK.

Today, we continue to work with local organisations in India, focusing on the areas where we can add most value. To that end, we work in priority geographical areas, giving grants to local NGOs for health, education, shelter, support for people with disabilities, and other social development activities. By doing so, we hope to give local agencies the resources that they need to improve the lives of the poorest and most vulnerable communities. Building the capacity of these organisations and the people that make change happen is one of our strategic aims in India.

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Ideas and Pioneers Fund

We can support interventions in any area of interest within the Foundation's mission and strategic priorities, that fall outside the current grant programmes or cut across them all.

Strategic discretionary funding

Often, these projects respond directly to our commitment to social justice and our interest in sustaining excellent practice, increasing impact and helping to improve policy and practice.

This funding enables us to remain flexible and respond to the world as it changes, and to be bold in our support for innovation.

We expect to fund a small number of exemplary organisations and projects each year by invitation only. Grants will range in size and type, from small development grants to large gifts and endowments, and will often extend across a number of years. We hope to develop a strong and supportive relationship with these organisations and projects, and to agree a learning programme as part of post-award plans.

Funding decisions will be taken by trustees and the senior leadership team. They will base their decisions on discussions with advisors and grants managers about emerging learning from other work that we fund, our collective field knowledge and expertise, and the external trends that are having an impact on the organisations we work with. Our partnerships with other funders are often supported by these strategic funds.

Learning and insight

We want to achieve the greatest possible impact with our resources. We are committed to adding value by building and sharing our data, knowledge and experience, and by supporting this approach across the fields in which we operate.

We believe that learning is a collective effort, and that to be effective it is important to explore what has worked and, crucially, what has not. We support those we fund to collect, share and use evidence in order to generate quality learning. We also support the testing of new approaches to improve practice, and we identify and fund research that addresses gaps in knowledge.

In turn, this helps us to understand more about the work that we fund, and to analyse and make informed decisions about our approach to grant-making. To create a reciprocal environment of knowledge exchange and to support a transparent approach to philanthropy, we share key findings from our grant-making and research with partners across the wider sector.

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