



Presentation of findings

Evaluation of the Libraries: Opportunities for Everyone innovation fund

By: Rob Francis (@ThinkingRob) and Viviana Mustata (@VivianaMustata)



Image credit: [Little Red Book Photography](#), Plymouth



- **Aims of the evaluation were to:**
 - Provide an overview of activities and highlight major themes;
 - Provide an understanding of the differences these made to participants, libraries and local communities (project impacts);
 - Draw out main learning from approaches taken by projects;
- **Mixed method approach** that incorporated elements of self-evaluation.
- Evaluation grouped projects into **5 clusters:**



Arts & culture



Digital



Families & Wellbeing



Literature & creative expression



Makerspaces





The available evidence suggests that the LOFE fund provided people with opportunities to reduce their experience of disadvantage

Engagement in co-design and co-production

Increased awareness of opportunities

Developed skills and confidence





The available evidence suggests that library services have developed innovative practices through the fund

Developed spaces

Improved digital confidence & skills among library staff

Improved understanding among library staff

Transformed service offers





The available evidence suggests that the LOFE fund provided people with opportunities to reduce their experience of disadvantage

Engagement in co-design and co-production

Increased awareness opportunities

Developed skills and confidence

The available evidence suggests that library services have developed innovative practices through the fund

Developed spaces

Improved digital confidence & skills among library staff

Improved understanding among library staff

Transformed service offers

Wider impacts on libraries

Improvements in staff morale

Transformation of library environments

Improved perceptions of library services

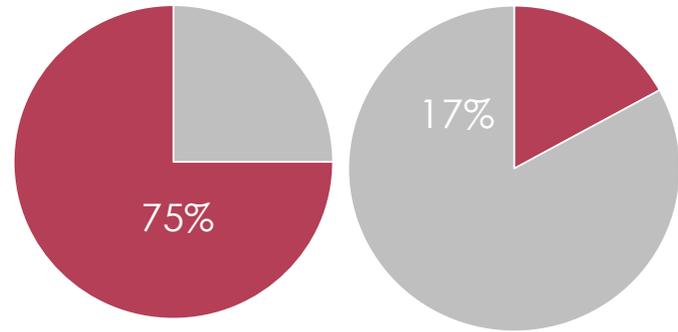
Improved relationships with local organisations



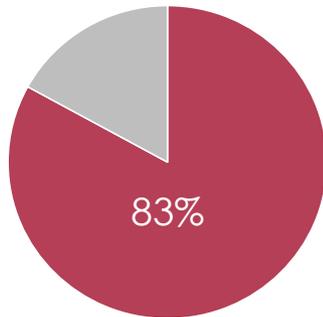


"I'd have to say that Storysmash helped me find my love for coding again and it's definitely helped me be more social, even if it was daunting at first. Having a group project has been really fun and inspiring!"
Participant from Storysmash

In **Hampshire**, 75% of participants said that the project had enabled them to improve contact with friends and family and 17% said that activities had helped them connect with new people



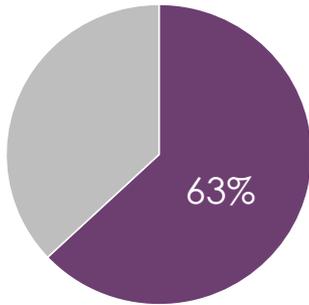
In **Staffordshire**, 83% of participants in co-production sessions and focus groups were resident in postcode areas which experience high social-economic deprivation



"I have a reason to leave the house."
Participant, Shared reading group



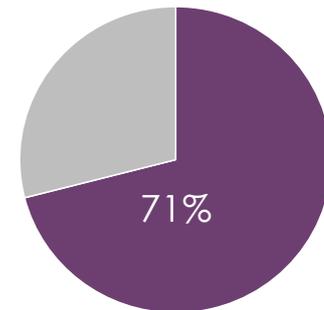
From one reading group in the **SW Region of Readers**, 63% of participants reported that their confidence had increased since joining and several participants commented that the group had either inspired them to read more or to start reading again



"It has been the best thing I have done for my mental health and confidence"

Participant, Shared reading group

In **Barnsley**, 71% of participants reported feeling very confident using a tablet device after taking part in the course



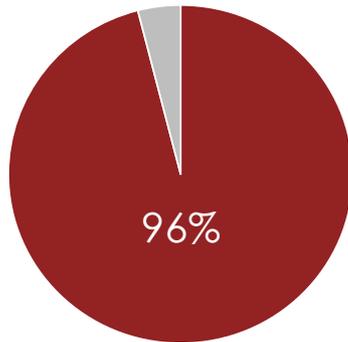
"I am using my iPad every day now (I'm beginning to show off...) - it's not shut in a drawer any more. It's magic!"
Participant (82)



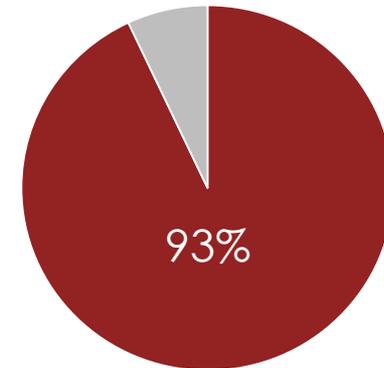
"I'm more mindful to [take] a few minutes of quiet to listen to my child playing; allowing her to just make [things], even if it's not what I thought or wanted. I don't need to control the situation, just enjoy the process with her."

Families and wellbeing activity

In **Manchester Libraries**, 96% of participants increased their knowledge about digital tools



93% of self-reflection sheets collected in **Staffordshire Libraries** show that the co-production sessions improved participants' knowledge on how to support child development





Enablers

In-kind contributions

Getting staff on board

Funding coordinator posts

Raising profile

Engaging vulnerable & marginalised groups

Informing design and delivery

Tailored approaches

Co-design and co-production

Embedding evaluation from project start

Convening multidisciplinary steering groups

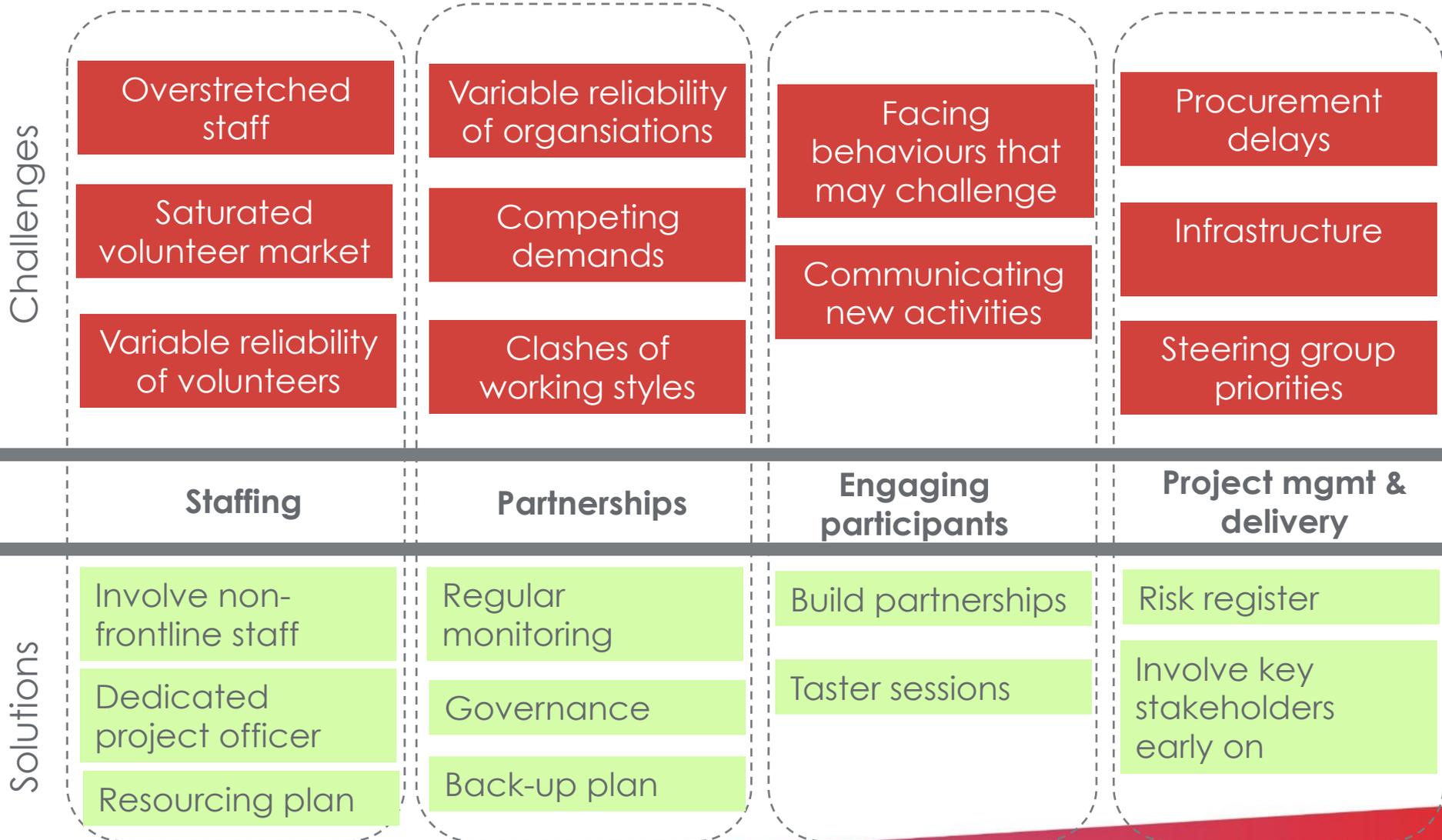
Staffing

Partnerships

Engaging participants

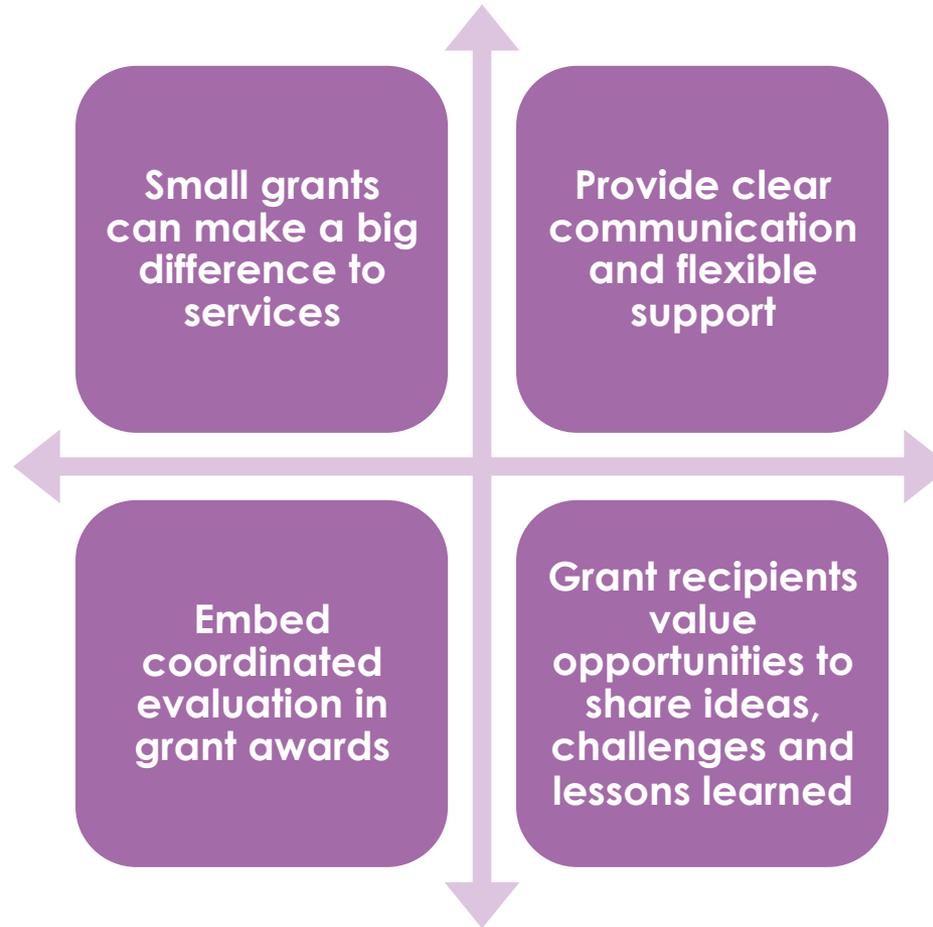
Project mgmt & delivery

Main findings: enablers and challenges





Project leads made a range of suggestions as to how DCMS and other organisations could support the funding of future projects:



Recommendations



The following recommendations have emerged from the delivery and evaluation of the LOFE fund:



Award funding in a way that focuses library activities on specific audiences and outcomes



Build in evaluation from the start of a project



Give libraries flexibility around their use of funding



Encourage (or require) libraries to reach out to local partners in order to deliver projects



Use programmes like this as a vehicle for building networks and learning across the sector



Thank you.



0207 239 7800
info@traverse.co.uk

252b Gray's Inn Road
London WC1X 8XG

www.traverse.co.uk

