



Voluntary
Action Fund



People Know How

Social Innovation Academy

Final Report: April 2015 - March 2016



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Introduction

People Know How is a social innovation organisation that works to unlock peoples’ ideas for a better future, today. We aim to support and empower them to mobilise their assets, get organised and fulfil their potential. Supported by the Voluntary Action Fund and the One City Trust, over the past year, we have developed and piloted our course in Social Innovation.

We have trained, equipped and supported 4 teams of volunteers to carry out community development, community consultations and social research toward designing innovative solutions to social challenges set by our 4 community partner organisations as summarised below:

Cockburn Association: engage Edinburgh citizens in considering the merits of the “green belt” and the need for affordable housing.

Scottish Adoption Agency: gather public attitudes towards adoption in Scotland whilst considering that there are 3 children seeking every adoptive parent.

The Broomhouse Centre: consult the local community on their needs and how they would like to see them addressed through the building of a new community centre.

The Living Memory Association (THELMA): analyse the current organisational strengths and opportunities and recommend a sustainable development approach.

We also set our work alongside Scottish Government National Outcomes as follows:

A. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need. Our work with the Cockburn Association will inform and influence planning and home building decisions.

B. We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations. Our work with the Cockburn Association will illicit the opinions of citizens in Edinburgh to inform how we protect and enhance the built and natural environment for future generations.



C. We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others. An understanding of "Rights and Responsibilities" informed the training undertaken by volunteers. All the work was rooted in community building and supported this outcome.

D. Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. The training provided enabled young people to excel in these areas.

E. Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed. Our work with Scottish Adoption will increase the number of adoptive parents available in the future.

F. We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society. We were committed to supporting people covered by the Equality Act 2010.

G. People are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it. Our work with the Living Memory Association has helped them support more people affected by memory loss and dementia.

This report outlines our journey, the process, conclusions, feedback, and strategic direction for ongoing work that has resulted. The learning we have gained from the pilot will shape our future direction and improve the quality of training and support provided to volunteers and future students as well as the projects we can fulfil for community partner organisations.



The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

www.gov.scot

Our Work

People Know How has developed several other strands of work as well as the Social Innovation Academy that are organised as themes:

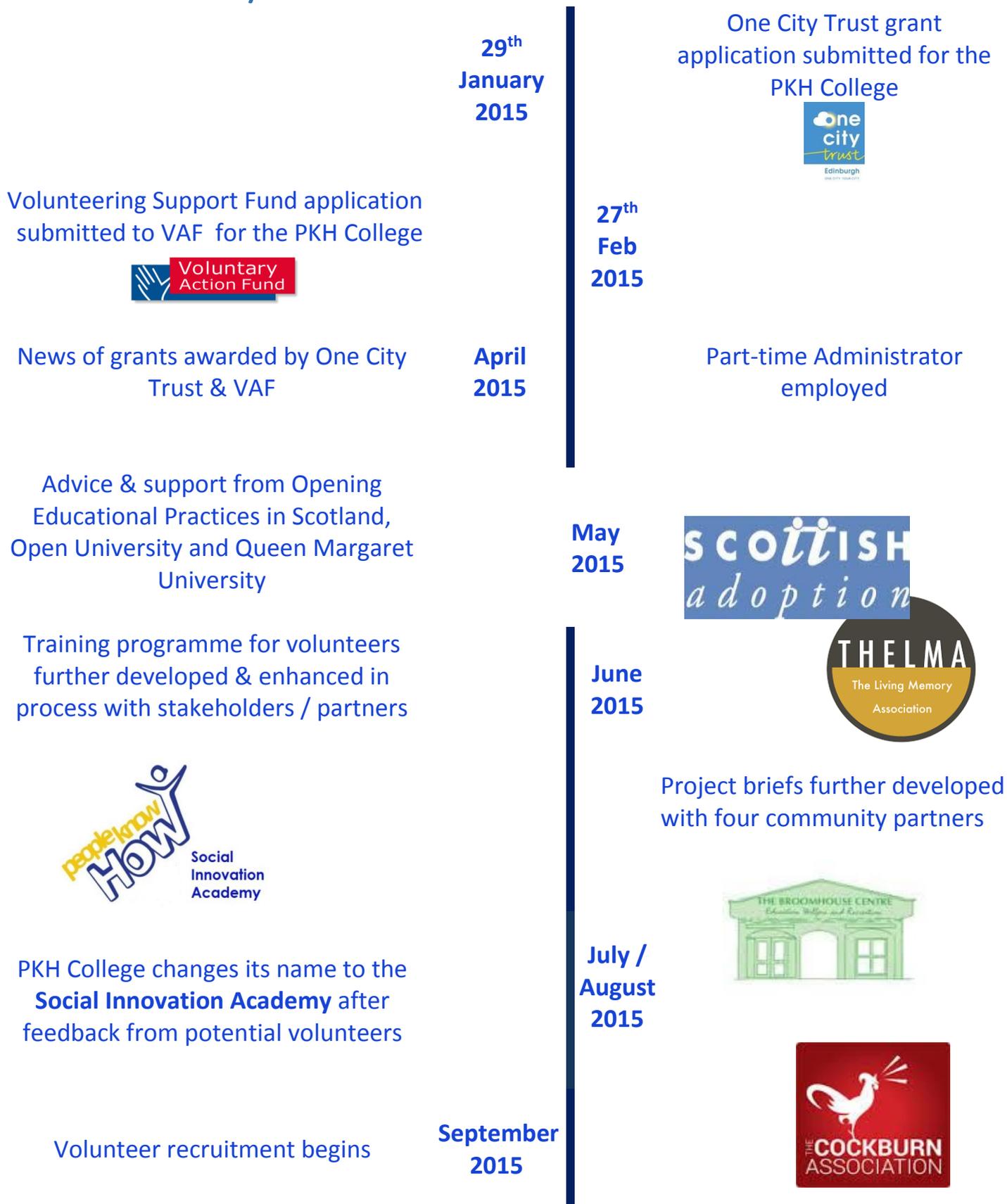
- **Learning for change:** We aim to integrate the aspects related with education, learning and training within a very supportive environment. We promote the use of practical skills and contact with real experiences. The projects we include in this theme are:
 - ❖ Social Innovation Academy
 - ❖ Digital Classroom – providing communities with access to IT and the internet
 - ❖ Reviewing & Disseminating Research – to inform innovative practice

- **Consulting Communities:** We aim to consult communities by training, equipping and supporting volunteers, community members and stakeholders to discover issues and identify solutions together. The projects we have / continue to work on in this theme are:
 - ❖ Spanish Speaking Community Consultation
 - ❖ Consulting with Children & Young People
 - ❖ Fairer Scotland Consultation
 - ❖ Healthier Scotland Consultation

- **Connecting cultures:** We aim to promote face to face dialogue between the Scottish Culture and other cultures and create fair, strong and inclusive communities. The projects we include in this theme are:
 - ❖ Shared Heritage - Shared Futures – with the Spanish speaking community
 - ❖ Culture Awareness – Kids Play – inspiring and encouraging children

- **Transforming lives:** We aim to work with children and young people so they make healthy, positive decisions and take positive actions. The project we include in this theme is:
 - ❖ Make It Happen – supporting young people affected by anti-social behaviour

Our Journey



Information Sessions

Oct
2015



Social Innovation Academy starts delivering training



Nov
2015

10th
Nov
2015

PKH relocates to bigger office & training rooms at St. Margaret's House

Lord Provost expresses support for the Social Innovation Academy

December
2015

Further round of volunteer recruitment. Additional volunteers join in January 2016

Initial feedback from volunteers collected

January
2016

Volunteers make informed decisions forming teams assigned to each community partner

Volunteers developing their Community Consultation Plans including focus groups and online engagement

February
2016

Giving & Learning Week. 4 teams present projects.



Volunteers presenting their team reports to Community Partners

17th
March
2016

24th
March
2016

Graduation Ceremony and Celebration (postponed to 26th April)



31st
March
2016

Final project report completed

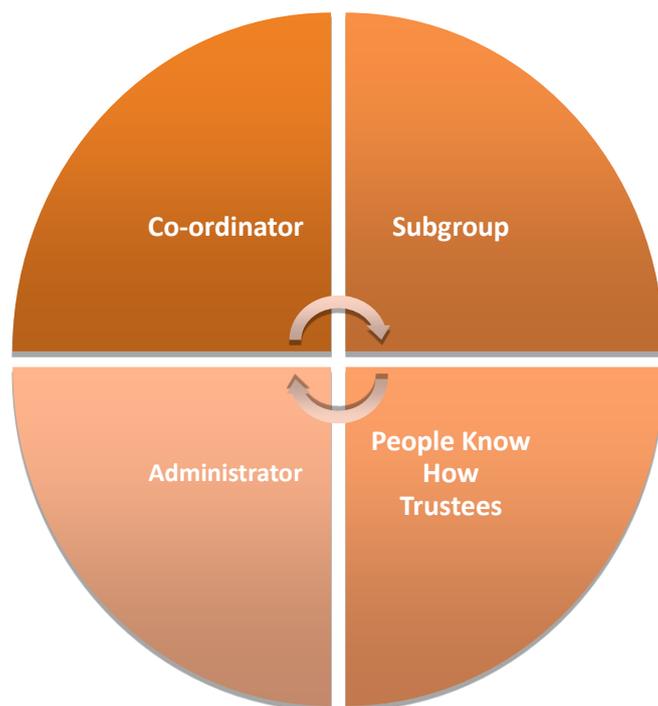
Process

The aim of the pilot was to test the concept of providing volunteers with training and work experience in social innovation with four community partners giving them the opportunity to deliver on a “challenge” using a social innovation approach. Therefore, our objective by the end of the training course was that volunteers would be able to understand and apply the process of social research and **community consultation in the context of Social Innovation.**

Management team

All People Know How **Trustees** were involved in delivery and overseeing the milestones and outcomes, with specific focus from the Development Sub-Group.

Project Coordinator: The Project Coordinator has been an integral member of the project team responsible for delivering training and developing projects, with responsibility on a day to day basis for organising and delivering the Social Innovation Academy and the projects with the community partners. This role has also involved close support and supervision of the volunteers.



The Project Development Subgroup has developed the Academy over the last two years and has overseen the pilot. It is comprised of trustees with relevant experience and knowledge, as well as volunteers who have delivered training and mentoring. The group and members have been involved in the organisational set-up and have provided support ensuring successful delivery of the project.

An **Administrator** has worked on the day to day delivery of the training and consultation including working on the training materials toward getting the course validated by Queen Margaret University and “badged” by the Open University.

Recruitment

Volunteers were recruited in 3 rounds. The first one started in September with Edinburgh Volunteer Centre being one of our main routes to engage with the volunteers. Alternatively, volunteers engaged with us and were recruited through social media and our website, using our own channels as well as our community partners. We also worked with our wider network of organisations especially those offering mental health and substance use recovery services to identify other suitable volunteers.



We have worked in partnership with Project Scotland over the last two years and they have provided a consistent source of suitable volunteers. They ran a specific campaign to attract volunteers through their channels, to the Social Innovation Academy. They have provided an excellent service in matching the "right" volunteers to the "right" volunteering opportunities, providing additional mentoring support and training opportunities to all our volunteers aged 31 or under.



Project Scotland invited us to their 10th anniversary celebration, as VIPs, in recognition of the support and training we have given to over 15 volunteers that they have placed with us in the last two years.



Information Session

Once we completed our first recruitment round, we invited 19 applicants to an Information Session. This provided the possible volunteers with more in-depth information and the opportunity to ask questions about the Social Innovation Academy. This was important in enabling volunteers to make an informed choice to join the programme. This approach has been very successful as we have enjoyed a very high retention rate and levels of satisfaction from volunteers as we ensured that the "right" people joined the programme and benefitted from our training, support, supervision and work experience.



Training Content

The training was based on open source training modules and packages from Open University and NESTA. We also had 5 training sessions delivered by volunteers, who had offered their time and expertise to deliver training in their specialist topics. In addition the Development Subgroup oversaw the course development and contributed their considerable training and project delivery experience.

The areas of “expertise” included;

Project Management & Delivery

Pedagogy and Learning through community engagement and Development

Designing, delivering and evaluating training

Understanding peoples’ cognitive processes and moral values

Empowering volunteers as experts.

The training content was divided into different stages / modules:

1. **Social Innovation:** gaining skills for developing and maintaining a functioning and effective team. Including, communication skills and learning styles.
2. **Project Design:** Project planning and communication skills. Volunteers met our community partners and the projects they took on as their “challenge”.
3. **Community Research and Consultation:** Volunteers learned how to interrogate existing social research and how to plan a community consultation.
4. **Engaging with Communities:** Data collection from online surveys and focus groups; including social media management and marketing skills.
5. **Analysing Results and Designing Innovative Solutions:** Analysing the collected data and planning recommendations and for the community organisations
6. **Delivering results:** Includes report writing, presentation skills and tools for communicating findings, solutions and recommendations.

The programme was delivered from November to March as follows:

November	December	January	February	March
Social Innovation	Project Design	Community Research & Consultation	Engaging with Communities	Analysing Results / Designing Solutions and Delivering Results
Training			Tutorials	
Team work				

During the first 3 month of the course *Volunteer Students* gained the necessary skills to been able to complete a project with the support and supervision of the Programme Co-ordinator. The programme varied the training to deliver tutorial sessions according to each team’s needs; making all the training focussed on the teams and their respective projects.



Each project team had 2 main deliverables to complete by the end of the Social Innovation Academy for their community partner:

- A final written report
- Presentation of their findings & recommendations.

Mentors & Support

Project Scotland gave the volunteers the opportunity to have a mentor who were responsible for monitoring and supporting them, addressing their needs, including helping them in overcoming barriers to learning in order to achieve their full potential. All our Project Scotland volunteers accepted this opportunity to have a mentor and had regular meetings with them. They have given us very positive feedback from this experience.

Additionally, People Know How also provided a mentor to all our volunteers aged over 31 providing similar support. The support provide by Project Scotland and People Know How will continue beyond the end of March and the pilot, for up to 6 months.

4 Community Partners, 4 Projects

The project aimed to tackle inequalities and poverty; encouraging enterprise, building strong, resilient, engaged and empowered communities; and improving opportunities for employment, representation and participation in civic life.



The project also wanted to meet educational and training needs for a range of volunteers in the Edinburgh area.

These are the 4 partner organisations that we worked with and a description of the process and outcomes achieved.

The Scottish Adoption

We agreed with the Scottish Adoption Agency that their team would help them to understand the communities' perceptions of the motivations and barriers to people becoming adoptive parents. The project title was "*Public Attitudes Towards Adoption in Scotland*".

The aim of their project was to inform Scottish Adoption of the perceived ‘myths’ concerning who can adopt and who is most likely to be adopted. They aimed to further the research that identified health, wealth, lifestyle, and age and relationship status, as important factors for those considering adoption; by discovering participants’ perceptions of children awaiting adoption.

To fulfil this aim they set out to design and trial a focus group that could inform the design of an online survey, with the aim being to deliver to Scottish Adoption with a “tested” focus group process and online survey that they could further use to inform their understanding on perceptions around adoption.

The final project exceeded this aim by running two focus groups that provided helpful data to both inform the design of an online questionnaire and provide informative data. The team promoted the survey online and received 100 completed questionnaires. The results from both the questionnaire and the focus groups were combined to provide a strong insight into public attitudes towards adoption in Scotland. Scottish Adoption will be using the focus group process further to gather more data and as part of their training for adoptive parents. They will also promote the online survey further as part of an awareness raising campaign on social media. They are working on new advertising material and a campaign with the results and findings from the project. People Know How and Scottish Adoption are in further talks on ways to work together and will be making a press release in due course.

The Broomhouse Centre

We worked with The Broomhouse Centre to understand how it can best serve the needs of its community. The centre was established over 25 years ago and has run a number of invaluable services to the area of Broomhouse ever since. These services currently include: youth befriending, a young carers project, a café training project, a dementia day care group befriending for older people, a catering service and a community health hub.



The aim of this project team, has focused on three main aims: To recruit volunteers from the Broomhouse area, to publicise existing services and to raise awareness about the centre with particular emphasis on the café project.

The team interviewed and spoke with people living in the community through engaging people “on the door step” as well as in the centre to gain a full appreciation of the views of people who use the services and live in the community. The results gathered by the team supported plans for a “dream build” that will see the building of a new purpose build community centre. Responses highlighted the diverse population of the area and the needs for everyone from the very young to the elderly.



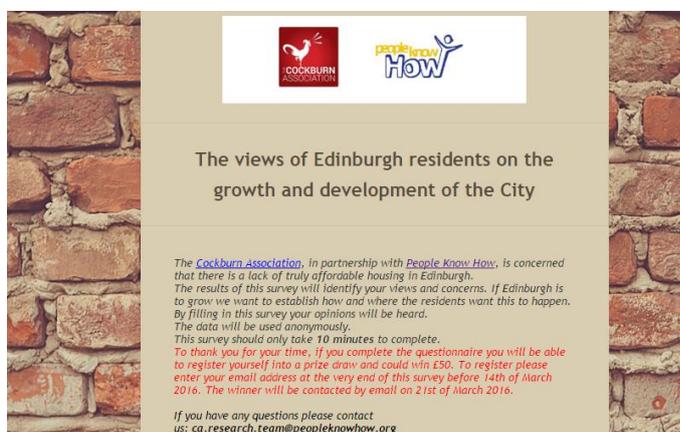
The Cockburn Association

We agreed with the Cockburn Association that the team would work on ascertaining residents' views on the planning and development of the City of Edinburgh taking into account the need for more affordable housing and the need for green spaces and to preserve the greenbelt.



The team carried out extensive background research of what is a complicated topic. They created an online survey to identify peoples’ views and concerns about a lack of affordable housing in Edinburgh and they canvassed peoples’

views on green spaces and the greenbelt. They collected over 400 responses via a successful online survey.



People Know How and Cockburn Association are planning a press release to convey the findings of the report that was produced by the team.

The Living Memory association

We worked with The Living Memory Association (THELMA) to analyse the strengths and opportunities of their organisation to develop a strategy for growth within a financially sustainable framework. The project was called “*There is a future for memories*”.

The team met with the THELMA team on a number of occasions and carried out background research into the field of reminiscence. They undertook a detailed SWOT analysis; with specific focus on:

- considering future funding and social enterprise initiatives
- creating different options for a business strategy and
- making suggestions for new marketing and promotional material.

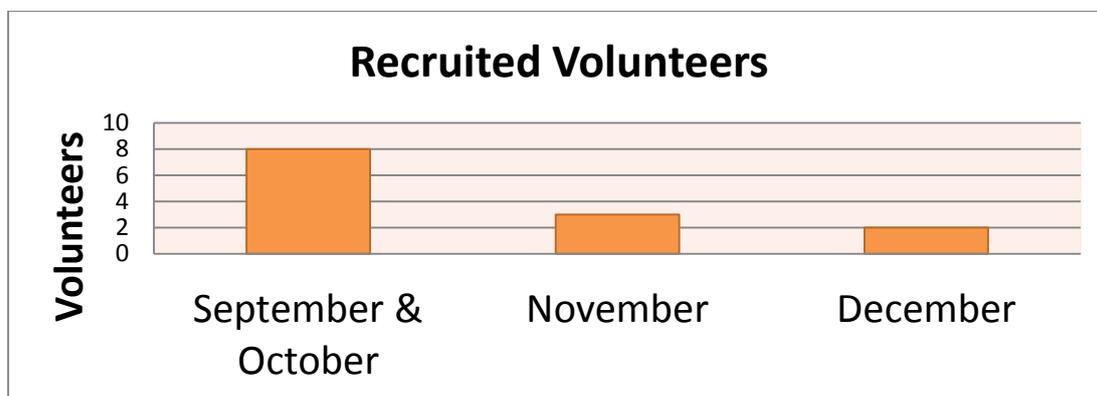


The final report and presentation was warmly received and the Directors and Staff team are considering their next steps to develop THELMA. People Know How and THELMA are also working on a new joint project.

Analysis of the Volunteer Teams

The Social Innovation Academy was targeted at volunteers looking to improve their education, training, practical work experience and increase their employability. In total, we engaged with 24 people through a selection process. People who decided not to join the Academy were advised and sign-posted onto other more suitable opportunities. 11 started the training in November with 1 of them leaving to take up employment before Christmas. We then recruited 2 more volunteers who joined in the New Year and all 12 volunteers completed the training and work experience up to the end of March 2016. 4 volunteers have decided to continue volunteering in new capacities and we are providing mentoring to 2 others on an ongoing basis.

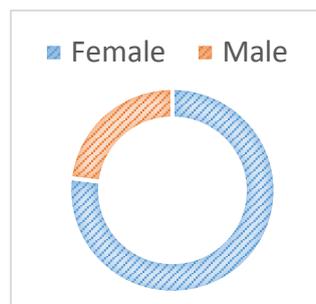
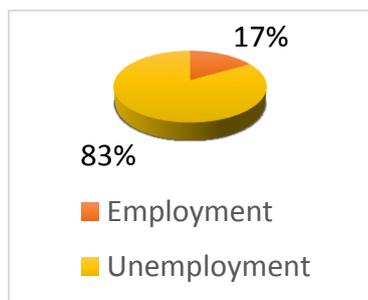
Recruitment was carried out in 3 rounds as illustrated below:



Attendance

We kept records of *volunteer students'* attendance over the 17 weeks, 3 days a week, commencing on 24th November. The average attendance was 83% with non-attendance attributed to either work commitments or sickness.

Characteristics



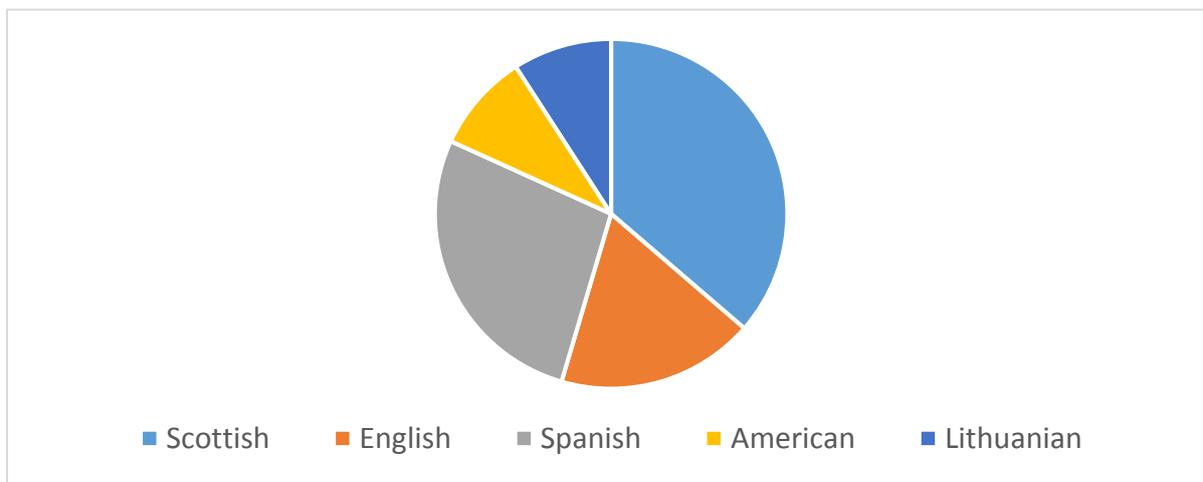
67% of the volunteer students were female and 33% male. 17% were in part-time employment.

Characteristics 12 Volunteer Students	Volunteers
Project Scotland Volunteers (Young people)	8
- Edinburgh’s Spanish Speaking Community (Unemployed)	3
- Higher Education	2
- Unemployed	3
Employment	2
In Recovery from Substance misuse	1

*We consider young people the age range Project Scotland terms: 16-31years.

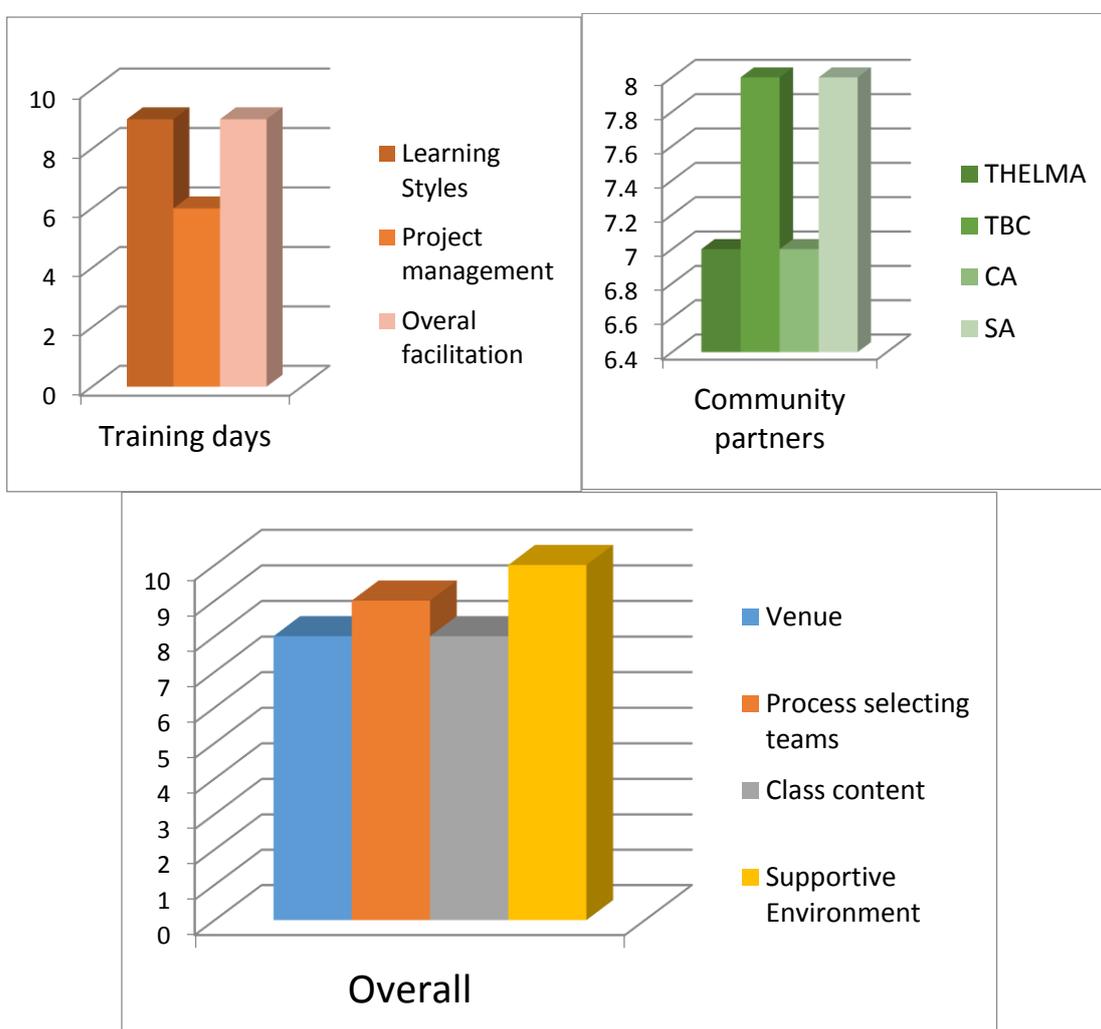
Nationality

The group was diverse in nature and the following nationalities were represented:



Feedback Analysis

Throughout the programme, feedback was sought from people individually, within a group setting and via an online form. The feedback enabled us to make immediate improvements and to factor in changes to future programmes. This is the link to the first feedback form, conducted after 2 months. We asked them to rate the programme from 0 to 10 across a number of areas including: the different training days, community partners and overall: <https://form.jotform.com/53434726732962>



Overleaf is a summary of feedback from the second feedback form: <https://form.jotform.com/60701945693966>



Positive feedback suggests that volunteers enjoyed learned from the training and work experience; and valued the opportunity to appreciate and develop their strengths. They were also able to provide suggestions for future courses.

Key Learning

We also asked Volunteer Students to complete a reflective account throughout the life of programme, to identify the course strengths, key learnings, areas for development, and any other comments they would like to add regarding the course. As a result of this process, we have identified a number of key challenges along with key learning for future courses:

Challenge 1:

The initial contact with partner organisations to meet the volunteers was delayed due to other commitments on their organisations. This situation delayed the start date of each team on their respective project.

Learning 1:

In future courses, we need to ensure that these meetings are arranged and fulfilled earlier.

Challenge 2:

Having more time for volunteers to write their final report. The training input happened too late in the process meaning that there was not adequate time to write the final report. All the teams managed to complete their reports on time but the process would have been more rewarding with more time.

Learning 2:

In future courses, we will provide training and guidance on report writing at an earlier stage.



Next Steps

We are committed to developing the Social Innovation Academy and are thankful for everyone’s involvement and contributions.

In recognition of the successful “pilot” we are holding a Graduation & Celebration on 26th April 2016 – courtesy of the Virgin Money Lounge in Edinburgh. We are inviting People Know How trustees, staff, volunteers, and associates to share our successes and learnings for the future as we plan our next Social Innovation Academy.

This section outlines our next steps:

1. Press release

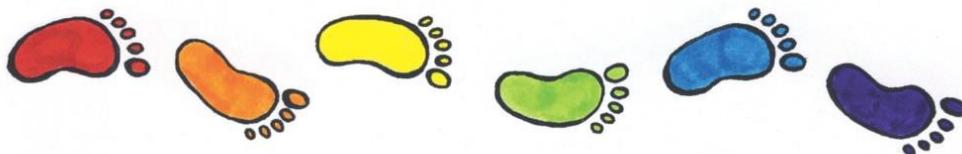
With the support of the Edinburgh Lord Provost, and other key supporters we will make a press release to celebrate the success of the Social Innovation Academy and promote the next programme.

2. Course validation

We are working through a validation process with Queen Margaret University to validate three new Social Innovation Academy courses – all longer than the pilot and at three different academic levels.

3. Case study and “badging”

We have been invited by Open University to present the pilot course as a “case study” recognising our use of open access and online training resources. We are also working toward having the course recognised and “badged” by Open University.



4. New community partners and projects

We have already identified a number of new community partners and projects for a future Social Innovation Academy that we plan to run from autumn 2016 subject to securing adequate funding.

5. Team of volunteer trainers

We have the commitment of a number of existing and new professionally, qualified and experienced trainers who have committed to delivering sessions of future courses within their specialist area of expertise and interest.

6. New community partners and projects

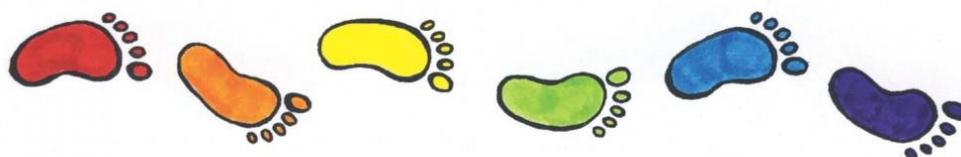
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7. Planning event

We are planning an event in June 2016 bringing together different stakeholders including community partners and volunteer trainers toward running a programme commencing in autumn 2016.

8. New premises

From April 2016 we are relocating to bigger premises within Ocean Terminal Shopping Centre. This has been secured rent free and provides the opportunity for us to consult, survey and run focus groups with the public on a range of issues including topics related to future community partner projects. We are also in talks to run a “community space” within the centre that charities and community groups could access. This will further build our networks.



Conclusion

People Know How has concluded a successful pilot **Social Innovation Academy** achieving everything we set out to achieve and more.

In essence we have achieved three things:

1. Successfully trained volunteers in social innovation skills that have benefitted them and achieved positive social change for others.
2. Successfully responded to social innovation challenges and delivered on projects set by community partners.
3. We have established a model that we can scale up and run long-term.

Furthermore we have:

Improved the cultural bridging in the training of volunteers and the community partner consultations and projects. We have established supporters within the business and enterprise community of Edinburgh who have pledged “in kind” support to us.

Improved civic inclusion due to the training and community consultation building process. Similarly, we have brought people together who would be unlikely to connect in their usual walk of life and people will have the opportunity to share their viewpoints whilst listening to and appreciating others.

Consulted citizens in the City of Edinburgh and involved them with the four community organisations partners in addressing social inclusion.

Demonstrated our commitment to further exploring and addressing the challenges and opportunities that further community research, partnership working, community development, and social innovation will present.