

Positive Impact Partners (PIP)

Building Capacity Through Partnerships



Positive Impact Partners (PIP) is the University of Leeds flagship programme designed to increase collaboration with the third sector, build capacity and positively contribute to our local communities.

Through PIP we connect local third sector organisations together with staff at the University to exchange knowledge and skills, share resources and create new collaborative partnerships, designed to bring mutual benefit. Our programme benefits our PIP partners, the University, third sector organisations and in making a positive impact on society.

Supporting Collaboration

PIP matches local charitable and social benefit organisations with University staff who can provide advice on a range of professional and business skills, as well as knowledge on a wide variety of academic disciplines. The diverse skill set available at the University has enabled third sector organisations to succeed in dealing with societal issues where they have previously struggled.

In return, PIP produces University research and curriculum projects and offers volunteering, internship and research opportunities for our staff and students.

Ultimately, PIP creates organisational and personal development opportunities for everyone involved!

Through PIP we aim to:

- Provide a structured and supported programme for staff and the third sector to be able to work together and make a positive difference.
- Share skills, knowledge and resources to increase capacity and capabilities of staff and third sector partners
- Facilitate greater awareness and understanding between the city and the University to enable collaboration.
- Increase collaboration between the city and University, leading to positive social change and more sustainable futures.
- Offer bespoke PIP plans for partners combining networking opportunities, workshops, one-to-one expert support and new collaborative partnerships to deliver mutually beneficial projects.

PIP Collaborative Projects

PIP has connected University staff with a wide range of voluntary organisations, community groups, charities, social enterprises, community interest companies and faith groups undertaking community benefit activities. Following are some examples of collaborations that have been formed through PIP and the key benefits they have provided for PIP partners, the University and the third sector.

Wakefield District Sight Aid

Wakefield District Sight Aid's Chief Executive joined PIP after identifying a need for a more business focussed approach to their operations and to ensure they were able to fulfil the growing needs of their members. We matched them with Research Impact Manager from our Business School who helped them to develop a business plan, attended board meetings and met regularly with the CEO to give fresh insights into the charity's ways of working. As a result of their PIP partnership, Wakefield District Sight Aid improved their commercial acumen and developed a more robust approach to generating income which led to an immediate increase in funding with the charity receiving £8000 from a successful grant application.

"I'm very satisfied with the scheme. There is help in the business community, if you're not afraid to ask." Graham Bell, CEO of Wakefield District Sight Aid.

Leeds Children's Circus

Leeds Children's Circus joined PIP as they recognised that the programme was a perfect opportunity to realise their business ambitions through collaboration with the University and other local third sector organisations.

With the support of Laura Bielby, Work Placement Officer, Leeds Children's Circus was able to secure additional funding from Gifting Leeds Foundation and developed new relationships with local organisations which made it possible to deliver 16 extra circus workshops targeting refugee women and older people. They also secured funding to recruit three student interns to support the organisation's growth and found new co-working space to base Leeds Children's Circus's business operations within a hub of other charities and social action organisations.

The experience was also an enriching one for Laura who joined PIP to gain experience working with new charitable organisations in the city and provided the opportunity to create exciting and creative projects which not only benefit the community organisation but also work to benefit students and staff here at the University.

"Taking part in PIP has opened our minds to all of the possibilities that Leeds has to offer and that's inspiring us to do more." Ohiane Uranga, Leeds Children's Circus.

International Mixed Ability Sport (IMAS)

International Mixed Ability Sport (IMAS) needed help to grow the organisation's capabilities. They were partnered with Ben Williams from the Research and Innovation Service who gave advice to help expand their activities at a European level and to new areas of sport. This helped IMAS deliver their first European-based Mixed Ability Rugby World Tournament held in Vitoria-Gasteiz attended by hundreds of players from all over the world.

"It is great to have someone to talk to who has a proven track record. It is amazing how many chance links come up in conversation that might lead onto opportunities and avenues to explore. We would urge any organisation to take up the opportunity of working with a friendly individual who is offering their time and expertise for free!" Jen Dyer, IMAS

Artlink Leeds

Artlink Leeds was partnered with Dr Lydia Lau, Associate Professor in Computing, to explore how digital technologies could be used to better engage with their service users, particularly those with learning and physical disabilities, mental health issues and dementia.

Their partnership resulted in a unique opportunity for a BSc Computer Science student to work with Artlink as part of their dissertation research project. The student worked closely with Artlink to develop their project brief and undertook primary research with their service users. This project provided an opportunity for the student to work on a meaningful project with tangible results as part of their studies and gave them invaluable experience of working to a client's brief.

Ownership of the new bespoke system has now been transferred to Artlink and they continue to work with their PIP staff partner to implement the new digital technology for the benefit of their service users.

Fairtrade Leeds

Fairtrade Leeds joined PIP after recognising a need for support in increasing awareness and membership of their organisation. Through their one-to-one meetings with Tao Jiang, Associate Professor of Marketing Practice at our Business School, Fair trade Leeds identified a number of key ways to improve their marketing and communications practices. A research project was undertaken to identify and target potential members more effectively and their online presence was improved through development of their website and social media campaigns. The partnership are now investigating how Fairtrade Leeds can become a registered charity to open up funding opportunities. Through PIP, Fairtrade Leeds were able to take time out of their daily operational activity in order to consider their long-term strategic plans obtain the support they needed to realise their vision.

Jamyang Buddhist Centre Leeds

Kerry Prest, Director of the Jamyang Buddhist Centre, contacted PIP as they needed guidance on accounting in order to develop their charity's own finance systems. We partnered Kerry with Martin Tudge, Core Services Manager & Faculty Finance Officer from Leeds University Business School and they worked together to review the charity's finances and accounting systems. Through their partnership Kerry has built the confidence needed to take control of the charity's finances and as a result, he has implemented a new accounting system, trained the employees and is able to produce monthly financial reports to the charity trustees.

The Leeds University Business School also benefited from this project with Kerry's input and support around mindfulness training available to University staff.

"I was really grateful for Martin Tudge's advice and understanding of my charity's needs. I would definitely recommend the scheme to others." Kerry Prest, Director, Jamyang Buddhist Centre Leeds

Communication Matters

Emily Campbell is the manager of a UK-wide charity with responsibility for running all of their business operations. Emily came to PIP asking for expert knowledge and advice around effective management. We partnered Emily with Rachel Greenhalgh of the UK Mathematics Trust based at the University. Being the Executive Director of a UK wide charity, Rachel has been able to guide Emily on a wide range of business areas relating to charity management, sharing expertise on everything from recruiting trustees, charity structure, governance and human resources as well as providing insight on using the charity's strengths to overcome future challenges.

"It is great to know Rachel is there as a port of call for anything we may need help with!" Emily Campbell, Charity Manager, Communication Matters

IntoUniversity South Leeds

Three of IntoUniversity's staff were matched with University of Leeds staff partners. Support was provided throughout a range of professional skills areas, including providing advice with finding new networking and professional training opportunities; creating strong community engagement; and managing their relationship with their corporate partners.

“My whole team applied for the scheme- it is a fantastic way to build your team's confidence and utilise the broad expertise and knowledge within the University.” Eleanor Rowley, Team Leader, IntoUniversity South Leeds

Carers Leeds

Carers Leeds joined PIP after identifying a need to better understand the issues and challenges experienced by older unpaid carers for people transitioning out of hospital. Carers Leeds research needs have been interpreted with the support of Sarah Urwin, Professor of Sociology, into an MSc Inequalities and Social Science Applied Project.

As a relatively under-researched area, the outcomes of this project are far reaching for older unpaid carers living in Leeds. The partnership hope to expose the role and experiences of volunteer carers which are largely hidden from societal view, identify implications and changes needed in public health policy and for Carers Leeds to be able to address some of these issues by providing additional support services.

Get Involved

The PIP programme is open to all University staff, individuals working in the third sector (either paid or voluntary), charitable organisations, state-funded schools and any other social-benefit organisations.

For more information, visit <http://sustainability.leeds.ac.uk/positive-impact-partners/>

Or contact us at: sustainability@leeds.ac.uk