

September 2019

ECFI Midterm survey 2019

ECFI ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTE TO BUILDING A COMMUNITY FOUNDATION MOVEMENT

What can ECFI peer learning and networking activities contribute to those who are working in Europe either for a community foundation (CF) or a community foundation support organisation (CFSO), as a staff or a volunteer? Do they help address local and national challenges and build the movement? We wanted to find out if and how participation in peer learning impacted on their work. 60% of participants in ECFI activities responded to a mid-term survey. Here are the main findings.

Responses were around 50:50 between CFs and CFSOs - mostly staff members. Their interest in participation in ECFI activities was mostly based on an interest in learning from colleagues working all over Europe: Learning about new practices (like giving circles and community-led needs analyses) and activities, learning about challenges others are facing, and by getting a new perspective on their work, were as important as building a network.

Whereas 91 % felt that knowledge and skills increased as a result of their participation, the transfer to daily business seems more difficult: only 60 % are planning to start new approaches/practices/initiatives based on learnings they gained from ECFI activities. We are conscious therefore that we should endeavour to find ways in which we can help ensure the application of learning.

Most important for ECFI were responses concerning ideas for future ECFI activities, contents and approaches. There was high interest in activities which help to increase the leadership role of CFs and CFSOs, like help to identify more complex long-term needs and well-being of people in the community through community-led needs analyses or building of long-term, impact-oriented resources for community needs.

Highly interesting are skill building activities like fund raising and asset development, and communications. Regarding topics of interest, the SDGs take a very high interest followed by inequality whereas migration and democracy take a lower interest. Asked

about relationship building, connecting with peer organisations in other countries is matter of particular interest in ECFI activities.

The detailed responses and further ideas will inform content, methods and formats of ECFI activities for 2020.

From responses to current topics that CF and CFSO are mostly concerned with at the moment ECFI draws especially motivation to build on specific workshops/activities which help starting to work with SDGs as a framework and to help facing the main challenge which is around growing and investing assets and building an endowment or other form of long-term sustainability.

The ECFI team says thanks to all those who helped with their time and effort!