



The Good Foundations Consultancy

Third Sector Governance and Strategy

Nigel Siederer

I've been working with the third sector and its supporters since the mid-1970s, both professionally and through trusteeships. I've worked inside national organisations and in local areas across the UK. On the way, I've gathered good contacts with government and strong international links. In 2002, I set up the Good Foundations Consultancy to share what I've learnt.

'Good foundations' expresses how I help voluntary organisations as a consultant - to achieve clear aims and good structures, and to learn from each other through good networks. The name is also a nice word-play that reflects my strong links with grant-making foundations. I'm plugged in to key support organisations and other consultancies, so I know where to find extra skills if needed. But I like handling things personally, and I always do a thorough job.

This leaflet explains what I do and how I've been able to help. There's more on my website at www.good-foundations.co.uk - complete with a Jargonbuster, and lots of other things I've written. If you think I can help, contact me for an initial free discussion at 020 7639 9840 or nigelsiederer@good-foundations.co.uk or write to me at 76 Erlanger Road, London SE14 5TH.

What I do

Training with trustees – sessions of a day or half-day, covering Trustees' responsibilities under the new Charities and Companies Acts, and other topics like *Renewing your Board*, *Running an AGM*, and for staff: *Agendas and minutes: How to help your Board have good meetings*.

Governance – reviewing constitutions, membership schemes, committee remits – commonsense opinions well grounded in charity law, help with drafting and in briefing a lawyer if necessary.

Sector-wide sense – working with third sector strategy and data, compiling research results, interpreting them in good context locally, across the UK and internationally.

Strategic reviews – help with strategy planning, chairing and facilitating review days, especially with medium-sized organisations that are trying to grow.

Working with funders – helping grant-makers to organise their special contribution to society, assessing applications, developing strategies, good procedures and best practice; designing forms, evaluating results, interim management.

Building networks and umbrella organisations – helping organisations to share good practice, training and information, and to relate to government in principled and independent ways; mentoring senior staff and trustees; interim management.

Writing and editing – writing everything from leaflets to policy papers to pithy journalism; editing and proofreading to tight deadlines; specialist topics: grant-making trusts, charity law.

My experience

30+ years in the voluntary and charitable sector, including 19 as a chief officer, 28 years with umbrella organisations, 4 years running a grants programme, and a variety of trusteeships.

First chief executive of the Association of Charitable Foundations (ACF) – the UK's premier good practice organisation for independent grant-makers, with 300 members.

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My experience (cont.)

Helping to start brand new organisations: including ACF, the pioneering Lambeth Umbrella group of advice centres, and the Federation of Independent Advice Centres (now Advice UK).

Work with many national sector networks, and at government/corporate/voluntary interfaces.

Expert knowledge of charity and trustee law, a key lobbyist for the Trustee Act 2000, monitoring the new Charities Act.

Analysis of policy and consultation documents, drafting standards and codes of conduct.

Good international links, especially with foundations and their networks.

Who I've worked with as a consultant

Association of Charitable Foundations – confidential salary survey, policy analysis, writing

Capacitybuilders – leading teams analysing local infrastructure investment plans

Charities Aid Foundation – reviews of data on local voluntary sector, grant-making trusts

City Bridge Trust – review of funder collaboration on knife crime initiative

City University Cass Business School – course designing/teaching on grant-making MSc/Diploma

Colyer-Fergusson Charitable Trust – assessor for major awards programme

Community Development Finance Association – governance review, lobbying on law reform

Community Foundation Network – presentation on the current funding environment

Derbyshire Community Foundation – review of governance / potential membership scheme

Directory of Social Change – reviews and journalism for *Funding for Change* magazine

Electoral Reform Society – chairing a commission on internal governance

Futurebuilders – compiling large database of organisation development consultants

Hillingdon Community Trust – Review of baseline needs and activity by funders

Home Office – preparing consultation paper; assessing grant applications / business plans

Institute of Fundraising – pro tem manager of tax-effective giving project

Int'l Network on Strategic Philanthropy – paper on principles of foundation accountability

Sir Walter St John's Educational Charity – interim manager of local grant-making trust

This is just a selection. And I've led many trustee training and facilitation sessions which are too numerous to list.

I've also been a staff member or trustee of: Local Development Agencies Fund, London Voluntary Service Council, National Council for Civil Liberties (now *Liberty*), McDougall Trust, Fair Trials International, National Council for Voluntary Organisations, and many others.

What clients have said about my work

"[the most] excellent participative training I have ever had." "I found Nigel Siederer's presentation on Governance particularly useful." "Many thanks [for] such a thought-provoking study." "...a blueprint for improvement [which] will be implemented." "...an excellent piece of work relating to a very complex and difficult situation." "You have played a vital role in the development and establishment of our scheme, [which has] contributed greatly to our success." "Many thanks for your time and skill in your usual thorough style!" "Congratulations...on conjuring up such a practical way through the morass via your excellent report. A very difficult objective but you've achieved it. Well done!"



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