

Case Studies – A Guide

Case studies can help you to demonstrate the difference your project has made to your beneficiaries. We love them because they bring your stories to life and so we and our funders and prospective donors can see how grassroots organisations use our funding and the impact it has on those you are supporting.

We ask all the organisations we fund to provide us with case studies.

How to write a good case study

A case study is just a personal story of change and progress, which demonstrates the impact that your organisation has had on them. It will usually be about an individual, but could also be about a family, group or community. It can be written by the organisation about a beneficiary, or by the individual themselves, or by someone close to them who can describe the impact and change they see and also any the difference this made more broadly.

Case studies don't need to be full of data, they should simply tell the story of the difference the grant has made. It can reveal information around personal background and attitudes, as well as information around such areas as health, ability and situation to bring the story to life.

Think about how a case study might demonstrate impact in one of more of our key theme areas -

- Health and Wellbeing
- Poverty
- Environment and Climate
- Equality and Equity

Below you will find some things to consider when writing a case study:

Organisations

- Always keep focussed on your project's intended outcomes.
- Is there one beneficiary's or family's story that stands out? Someone who has
- ing their
- to you and all your beneficiaries. It could be
- or a number of shorter case studies. It could be about a whole group who have been personally impacted.
- Always anonymise or change the name of individuals.
- **Beginning:** provide context and a baseline for the beneficiary/s, explaining how things were before they engaged with your project.
- **Middle:** describe the activities the beneficiary/s has been involved in. Include information on their progress and achievement, particularly towards intended project outcomes. Don't be afraid to include factors that are a work in progress.
- **End:** finish by providing a summary of the learning and outcomes. Consider the future of the beneficiary and what they hope to do once the project has finished. Has it also affected others in the community? Remember this this is just the 'story so far', not the end of their or your story!
- Use direct quotations from them or those around them or from your organisation to bring the story to life.

Individual grantees / beneficiaries

Using an individual's own voice is a great way to bring impact to life.

- Use words you are comfortable using, not what you think we might want to hear!
- **Beginning:** Background information. Start by describing yourself and your life before you took part in the project. How were you feeling? What did you find difficult?
- **Middle:** How has it helped? Think about the bigger picture. If you have joined a new group, what difference has it made to your life or to those around you? How do you feel now?
- **End:** what do you hope to achieve now? What do you think the future will
- How is that different to before? Remember this is just your story so far, not the end of your story!

We will always change personal names, but if the individual is happy to use their own name or accompanying photograph, we will need to see an appropriate signed consent.

Please feel free to contact the Grants Team at Suffolk Community Foundation for more help or support.

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