

Report back to The Funding Network

- 1. Name of your organisation and date funded by TFN:** Laces Community Club, Langdon Park Laces, March 2014

- 2. What was the project you sought funding for from TFN?**

We sought support from TFN to establish a new project site in Tower Hamlets. This was for Langdon Park Laces on the site of a new youth facility in Langdon Park. The aims of Laces are to raise aspirations of young women (ages 11–17) through sport and we were keen to grow into another area to test that our model worked.

- 3. Were you able to do this work as you described it in your application and presentation?**

Yes. We were successful in establishing a club and replicating our model. We measured the results of our project through observation (recorded data on number of participants each week, and community projects the club engages with) as well as surveyed data on participant demographics (level of aspiration, future aspirations, highest level of education obtained by family members, etc). We also monitor the number of qualifications obtained by our participants and volunteers.

We trained 4 coaches with their first aid, child safeguarding and youth level 1 football badge. 4 of our participants achieved their Dance leaders level 1 qualification.

- 4. If you were not able, please explain what happened and why?**

One thing we didn't anticipate was how difficult working with the youth centre was. Although it was a 'partnership' the vast number of programmes the centre had often interfered with our programme. From double bookings, to asking to take players from our session for other classes were a challenge to navigate, however a very valuable learning experience for us in choosing partners going forward.

- 5. Can you measure, assess or describe the change that happened as a result of this work?**

The biggest change the project generated was establishing the first female only football club in Langdon Park. We trained outside in the summer months drawing a lot of attention to female football, especially in a borough where a high Bengali population exists and many females are discouraged from playing (this was feedback provided to us from parents and carers).

For our Langdon project, we engaged 36 girls; retained 24 of these (measured by consistent participation for a 3 month period).

Of the 24 players we worked with, 18 of these had aspirations of being famous when issued the baseline survey. 3 months later, all 18 of these players had changed their aspirations. For us it isn't about deterring players from goals of being famous, but rather inspiring them to know that there are many options and career choices out there, that can be earned and achieved rather than left to chance or talent shows. The Langdon Park Laces project was solely funded by the Funding Network and it even helped us grow into Limehouse, where are newest project site lives.

One thing we noticed at Langdon Park was the girls we were working with were much younger than our Hackney project. In Hackney the majority of our participants are between 15–17. In Langdon Park they were 11–14. Whilst this didn't affect our delivery mechanism, it certainly raised our awareness of the issues facing young women at ages much younger than we had thought. We had 12 year olds talking about smoking and drug use!

6. As a result of presenting at TFN, did you experience any of the following;

Mailing list: 4 new subscribers

Volunteers: 2 new volunteers

Further funding from individual donors: 1 (£200)

Further funding from institutional funders 1 (£500 Betfair community sports programme)
an introduction that benefited your organisation: 11

7. Could you give us an estimate of how many people have been reached by the TFN funded project/work and by how much?

65 people have been reached – this figures includes participants, volunteers, staff and partners. This number is people engaged on a regular basis, of a period of 3 months or longer.

8. Can you tell us any personal stories to highlight the value of funding from TFN?

Organisation story

For Langdon Park Laces we wanted to see if using some of the Hackney Laces older players, trained up as coaches would work as a resourcing and apprenticeship idea. We trained 4 girls with their football badges and brought them into the staff team asking them to help grow Laces. Whilst all 4 girls did very well, one in particular, Alice just thrived. She pretty much lead the whole project, recruited new players, was there every week, on time and was an inspiration to not only the girls but to all of us. At only 18 she grew Langdon from nothing. Towards the end of 2014 we started giving her more responsibility, including managing small budgets, and interviewing new volunteers. Additionally, with support from the Laces board, Alice has successfully secured a full athletic scholarship in America for Sept 2015. We will be sad to lose her but are so inspired by her ambition and drive to further women's football in her borough and beyond.

Participant story

Our very first session had one participant. Her name is Holly and she is 11. In the first session Holly revealed that she has always wanted to play football but didn't know a team. She also revealed that her older brother has Down syndrome and her younger brother is ADHD and that her social worker was picking her up because her mum "can't look after her well". During our 8-week pilot, Holly never missed a session. During the past year, Holly was only absent once. Each week she came, she became more ambitious, better at football and really found a place to belong with the team. She proudly wore her Laces t-shirt each time and even trialled for her school team and made it. During the summer she began to bring friends along. When we meet participants like Holly we are reminded why we exist. To be there every week as a support network, an activity and a place for young women to call their own.

9. Since presenting at TFN, has your organisation undergone any significant change(s) which our donors would be interested to know about (these changes do not need to be related to the experience of presenting at TFN).

Since receiving funding in March, Laces has experienced quite a lot of change. In June, Keisha Graham Benjamin was appointed Director. Keisha has been with Laces since its inception and Katee Hui (founder) coached Keisha when she was 15–17 years old. Laces has received support from Sport England's This Girl Can campaign and expanded into Limehouse where we are now running an operation similar in size to Hackney. We have also moved a lot of our Langdon Park Club to Limehouse because of ongoing struggles with the youth centre. This move did not affect our existing players.

10. Do you have any other comments regarding TFN funding?

We literally couldn't have scaled without your support. For this we are so grateful.

11. Can you please include any relevant photos or clips that may relate to the project.

See attached.