

TFN Impact Report



Name of your Organisation:	Sustainable Soils Alliance
Name of the project TFN funded:	Live pitch February 2022
Date Funded by TFN:	23rd March 2022
Were you able to undertake your project as planned?	Yes
If no, please outline how the project has changed.	
Can you describe and/or demonstrate the specific impact that TFN funding has had against your initial objectives?	<p>Our underlying objective is to campaign for corporate and government policies that achieve the goal of sustainably managed soils within the space of a generation. As a result, an important proxy metric of our success is our reputation and network - the range and impact of the organisations that look to us to provide them with expertise about the problems facing our soils - and what they need to do about them.</p> <p>Our reputation has consolidated over the period since the award, and we now regularly collaborate on and lead projects with a wide range of bodies, from the Defra soils team to Tesco, WWF, the Environment Agency, and the Consortium behind the UK Farm Soil Carbon Code. Based on recognition of our position as the leading organisation for soil policy, we were invited to give oral evidence to Parliament at the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee inquiry into soil health. Here our co-executive director presented a summary of much of our work and policy asks to MPs, alongside leading figures in the soils community. Beyond this, some of the specific projects the funding has contributed to include:</p> <p>In our role leading the Farm Carbon Code Consortium we published Recommendations on minimum requirements for high-integrity soil carbon markets in the UK. This Environment Agency report aims to help shape the development of agreed standards and rules for the growing marketplace for soil carbon in the UK.</p> <p>We provide regular advice to the team developing the Sustainable Food Trust's Global Farm Metric, which is set to become a world-wide metric on farm sustainability.</p> <p>We co-created the University Plymouth ELMs-Exchange Programme on evidencing the Sustainable Farming Incentive, launched at a multi-stakeholder workshop attended by experts, policymakers and practitioners. This has led to ongoing work on how government incentivisation of sustainable farming actually delivers for soil health, the learnings of which will be available to other UK nations as they continue to develop farming policies.</p>

	<p>We launched the UK Soil Health industry Platform (SHIP), which brings together 11 of the biggest food brands in the UK. The SHIP aims for these businesses to commit to reducing soil damage and fostering soil health improvement within their UK supply chains. The immediate mechanism for this is a commitment to adopting universal soil health metrics, identifying practices that cause risks to soils and increasing consumer awareness about the importance of healthy soil.</p> <p>Using our public-facing initiative UKSoils, we organised the first ever UK Soil Awareness Week, aimed at kick-starting a public understanding and appreciation of soils. The week was promoted widely on social media and our science advisor was interviewed on BBC News.</p> <p>Lastly, the funding has allowed us to hire an additional member of staff, increasing our core team to five, which has widened our reach in terms of government consultations we are able to respond to and projects we can lead.</p>
<p>What portion of the project did TFN fund?</p>	<p>5%</p>
<p>How many direct beneficiaries did the TFN funded project reach?</p>	<p>Our work is about systemic change across the UK. This funding helped us reach an increasingly wide audience.</p>
<p>How many indirect beneficiaries did the TFN funded project reach?</p>	<p>The funding allowed us to demonstrate to our main funder, the Esme Fairbairn Foundation, that we are able to match their funding from other sources, which is a condition of their support.</p>
<p>Were you able to leverage further funding as a result of TFN support?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>If yes, how much were you able to raise?</p>	
<p>Did you receive any pro-bono support, volunteer offers or introductions as a result of the event?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>If yes, please can you provide details of the support you received?</p>	<p>Not directly. However our Champion Tim Smit pitched to the Funding Network for us, which is an example of the type of voluntary support the SSA enjoys from its supporters and community.</p>
<p>Has the training you received from TFN better prepared you in pitching your</p>	<p>Yes</p>

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organisation to potential funders?	
Has TFN increased your capacity to raise further funds?	Yes
How important was TFN funding in helping you achieve your objectives?	We would have found it difficult to achieve our objectives without TFN funding
Since presenting at TFN, has your organisation undergone any other significant changes?	Our small team has increased from four to five staff.
Do you have any other comments or feedback on the experience of the TFN process?	TFN feedback on the training we received was especially valuable as it required us to consider an audience that is politically and environmentally engaged - but not necessarily familiar with some of the specific day-to-day technical and policy issues we face. Examining our messaging, tone of voice and level of detail for this audience was a very useful exercise - and a testbed for subsequent presentations. The live event was a wonderful experience that allowed us to tell our story in a new, concise and imaginative way. Every opportunity to do so helps us become more fluent in describing what we do. Endorsement of our mission and approach, such as that inferred in the generosity of pledges and donations to us on the night, provides invaluable feedback that we are doing the right thing in the right way and helps build morale internally.
Can you tell us any personal stories to highlight the value of the project?	Our Executive Co-Director appearing before a Parliamentary Inquiry means his mother and nephew finally understand what he does for a living! He is appearing on Farming Today this Friday meaning his Cotswold neighbours might finally get it too!