

Impact Report 2025/26

Petallica Flower Farm
#BackedByTheFore2026

Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
The Fore Way	5
Our Goal: Grassroots to Nationwide Impact in Five Years	6
Impact: Performance of The Fore	8
Impact: Performance of Charities #BackedByTheFore	10
Finding and Funding the Best	13
Convening Partners and Philanthropists	15
Connecting Our Leaders With the Networks They Need	17
Advocacy and Thought Leadership	21
The Year Ahead	23
Full List of Charities #BackedByTheFore | 2025/26	24
With Thanks to Our Partners	26

Cover image: Petallica Flower Farm CIC #BackedByTheFore

From Our Founder and Chief Executive

It might seem an unlikely moment for optimism. Global instability, growing social challenges and mounting pressure on public finances offer headlines with little cause for celebration but from where we stand, something extraordinary is happening.

Across the UK, a movement is gathering momentum. People are stepping forward, determined to tackle society's greatest challenges and refusing to accept that things cannot be better.

A year ago, we could see the green shoots of this movement emerging. Twelve months on, they are taking root - in 15 years of backing grassroots innovation, I have never felt such a powerful sense of possibility. For too long, the three pillars of our society, government, business and civil society, have operated largely in isolation. Meanwhile, extraordinary people in communities across the country have been developing solutions to the challenges on their doorsteps, with little recognition and even less support.

The problem has never been a shortage of ideas, talent or determination. It has been our failure to recognise, trust and invest in them. At The Fore, we have now spent over a decade challenging that failure. We have seen what happens when exceptional social entrepreneurs receive the funding, skills and connections they need to succeed.

Since we started, we and the social entrepreneurs we support have felt like outliers, working against a system stubbornly resistant to change, but now something is shifting. Across business, philanthropy and wider society, we are meeting growing numbers of people eager to play their part. Experienced professionals offering their expertise. Individuals seeking to put their wealth to work. Businesses determined to create meaningful and lasting social change. And what excites us most is not simply their generosity. It is their approach.

A new kind of philanthropy is emerging. This new wave of individuals wanting to drive change is not arriving with all the answers. They are coming with curiosity, humility and a determination to learn. They want to understand what works, collaborate with others and back the people who know their communities best.

This matters enormously. The challenges we face are too complex for any one sector to solve alone, and resources are too precious to waste on activities that don't work.

At The Fore, we have shown that a different approach works. Now we have an opportunity to take it from the margins to the mainstream. Our ambition is no longer simply to help exceptional organisations succeed, but to change the funding system so that thousands more can follow.

There is still much to do. But the appetite to act is growing and new alliances are forming.

The solutions are already here.
People are ready.
The movement is building.

Together, we can create a society that solves its own problems.

Mary Rose Gunn,
Chief Executive of The Fore





Harry's Hydrocephalus Awareness Trust

#BackedByTheFore

The Fore | 2025/26

This year has been about turning ambition into action. We have continued to back exceptional solutions to our society's greatest challenges while convening the skills and networks their leaders need to thrive and reach their potential. Our highlights:

- First results from tracking our new goal show 31% of our portfolio have achieved nationwide impact since 2017 (p6).
- Our latest benchmarking report shows not just income improvement for our portfolio charities but that our process selects the highest potential organisations (p8).
- Greater levels of transformation are being shown by portfolio charities after increasing our grant size to £45,000 (p11) and improving the connectivity of our pro bono network (p17).
- We're creating new ways to raise the profile of our charities through showcases (p20), podcasts and our increased media recognition (p21).
- New levels of demand for high-impact philanthropy amongst donors – our education series, scale up and ring-fenced funds give philanthropists the tools to be the best funders (p15).
- Business is getting on board – we're building exciting new corporate partnerships with forward-thinking leaders committed to developing a stronger, better connected and more resilient society (p16).

About Us

The Fore is the UK's only venture philanthropy fund turbocharging the best small charities and social enterprises. We know there are thousands of local charities with powerful solutions to society's toughest challenges. However, since 92% of funding goes to the largest 8% of charities, their solutions rarely make it out of the grassroots.

We find and fund high-potential leaders of the best small charities and social enterprises; we convene visionary philanthropists – individual and corporate – with funding and skills to share; and we connect our leaders with the networks they need to thrive.

Our values are integral to our work: we back our social entrepreneurs as experts; we use the best business practice and we ruthlessly focus on impact (both ours and theirs). This gives the best small charities the platform to take their solutions from grassroots to nationwide impact.

Together, we are creating a society that solves its own problems.

The Fore Way

Together, we are creating a society that solves its own problems



We find and fund high-potential leaders of the best small charities and social enterprises

- Unrestricted, multi-year grants
- Equitable application process



We convene visionary philanthropists with funding and skills to share

- Community of funders
- Philanthropy education
- Partnerships with businesses



We connect our leaders with the skills and networks they need to thrive

- Networks: pro bono, peer and mentoring
- Training: skills workshops, impact measurement
- Wider ecosystem

Advocacy and thought leadership

Our goal: For exceptional grassroots solutions to achieve nationwide impact in five years

Our Goal: Grassroots to Nationwide Impact in Five Years

Evaluating our portfolio's progress

In 2025, we set our new goal: for exceptional grassroots solutions to achieve nationwide impact within five years of receiving our funding. To evaluate our portfolio's performance, we analysed 235 UK-operating organisations in cohorts funded between launch in 2017 and Autumn 2023. They were assessed against four indicators of nationwide impact: geographical expansion, model replication, policy influence and movement building.

31%

backed 2017 – 2023 achieved nationwide impact

Nationwide Impact in 5 Years

50% backed in FYE 2020

35% backed in FYE 2021



Our analysis found that 31.1% of organisations (73 in total) have already achieved nationwide impact. Most commonly, organisations scaled their services across multiple UK regions (29.8%), while others influenced national policy (6%), saw their models adopted by other organisations (6%), or led national movements and best-practice campaigns (9.8%). These results are striking given that our portfolio has an average income of just £119,443 when funded.

When we break the data down into annual funding cohorts, the data is even more encouraging for those reaching their five-year post-funding milestone: 50% of our cohort backed in our financial year ended in 2020 and 35.2% backed in our year ended in 2021 are now having impact nationally.

Scaling successes include: Action on Postpartum Psychosis (Spring 2018), turning a front-line peer-support lifeline into multi-regional networks and shaping NHS policy; Empire Fighting Chance (Autumn 2017) taking their solution – combining boxing and youth psychology – out of Bristol to train a network of boxing clubs across the UK to replicate their programmes; and The Marmalade Trust (Autumn 2020) pioneering the national campaign Loneliness Awareness Week which has shifted government policy and public attitudes towards loneliness.

All findings relied on AI-assisted research powered by Google Gemini and independent verification. As later cohorts have yet to reach their five-year mark, the results represent a conservative baseline that we will continue to track annually.

Our full report is coming soon. Watch this space!

Marmalade TRUST

APP Action on Postpartum Psychosis

EMPIRE FIGHTING CHANCE

Nationwide Impact in Practice

FBB
FOOTBALL BEYOND BORDERS

The challenge

Football Beyond Borders (FBB) is 'an education charity with a football wrapper'. They work with students who are passionate about football but disengaged at school, equipping them with support, skills and a vital relationship with a trusted adult needed to complete education. Youngsters who work with FBB are 6.5 times more likely to pass their GCSEs.

The Fore's support

In 2016, The Fore's funding enabled FBB to recruit a new Head of Communications. But our support didn't stop there. In 2017, we introduced FBB to a Treasurer who remains on the board today, while the team has continued to access a wide range of our wraparound support. Together, these opportunities have helped lay the foundation for FBB's remarkable growth.

The impact

From a start-up working with less than 100 children, FBB are now working on over 120 projects across the country and supporting over 2,000 young people each week through their programmes. FBB's annual income is over £4 million and they have global sponsors including The FA, Gilette, Nike, JD Sports and Paypal, and Marcus Rashford and Rhodri as patrons. FBB is now working with the government to influence education policy so that students at risk of exclusion across the UK have access to a trusted adult.

Other outstanding performers #BackedByTheFore

ALLCHILD
CODY DOCK
ACTION TUTORING
20 / 20 LEVELS



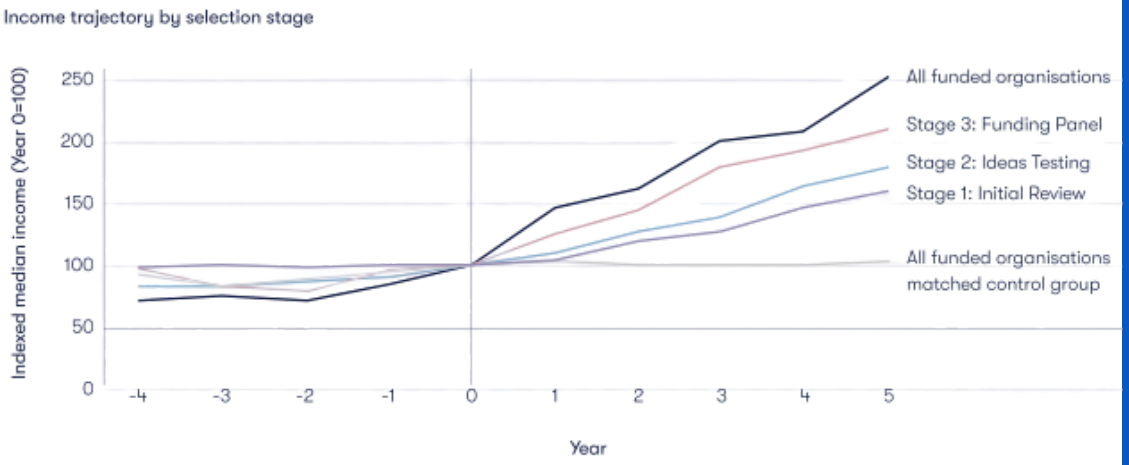
Evaluating The Fore's model

The results are clear: our model has cracked the code in how to identify and back the highest-potential charities and social enterprises.

From 2012 to 2026 our portfolio organisations show greater financial sustainability, with median income growth 4.5 times that of the matched control group. Income growth is even stronger among charities that engage with our wraparound support, with median annual growth of 22% compared with 16% for those who do not. Our portfolio charities also show greater resilience, with 95% remaining registered compared with 87% in the matched control group.

We are proud that our funding and wraparound support model has consistently been proven to strengthen organisational capacity, resilience and long-term sustainability. You can read the full report here.

Income of charities #BackedByTheFore vs a matched control group by selection stage



With huge thanks to Charizone for supporting us with pioneering this evaluation, which was subsequently developed and extended for the Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales.

Beyond the money: what our charities say

57.1% agree that The Fore's non-financial support is just as crucial as the funding

This year, we surveyed our portfolio charities to understand the value of our wraparound support. Here's what they told us:

Pro bono support: ★★★★★

86% agree it had a positive and tangible impact on their organisation

Workshops and training: ★★★★½

90% applied learnings directly to their work

Peer network: ★★★★★

84% agree that our peer networking dinners and Peer Connection Group were helpful

> **The Fore has been gold standard for us as it gives so much more than just the funding.**
> – Tony Dallas, Success Club

Democratising measurement of economic value

Building on last year's pilot with Pro Bono Economics and the Tech for Good Alliance, we've spent the past year refining The Fore Impact Index: a digital tool that helps small charities demonstrate the economic value of their work.

Using HM Treasury-approved wellbeing valuation methodology and a simple survey link, charities can turn everyday beneficiary feedback into robust, funder-ready evidence of impact, without the need for specialist expertise, significant time, or additional resources.

The need for tools like this is clear. Micro and small charities make up 77% of the sector but receive just 2.3% of charitable income. Despite their deep community roots and ability to respond quickly to local needs, many smaller organisations struggle to access funding because they lack the resources to evidence their impact in the ways funders increasingly require.

At a time when the UK is focused on making every pound of social investment go further, better evidence will help direct funding to where it will have the greatest impact.

Over the coming year, we're exploring if and how we can transform The Fore Impact Index from a pilot into a scalable, affordable impact evaluation platform for the sector. We know there are challenges for small charities around adoption so following evaluation of the pilot we're simplifying the survey experience, automating reporting, and exploring how the ethical use of AI can further reduce the burden on charities while improving the quality of insights the index can provide for funders and decision-makers.

If you're interested in supporting this high-impact initiative as a founding partner, we'd love to hear from you.

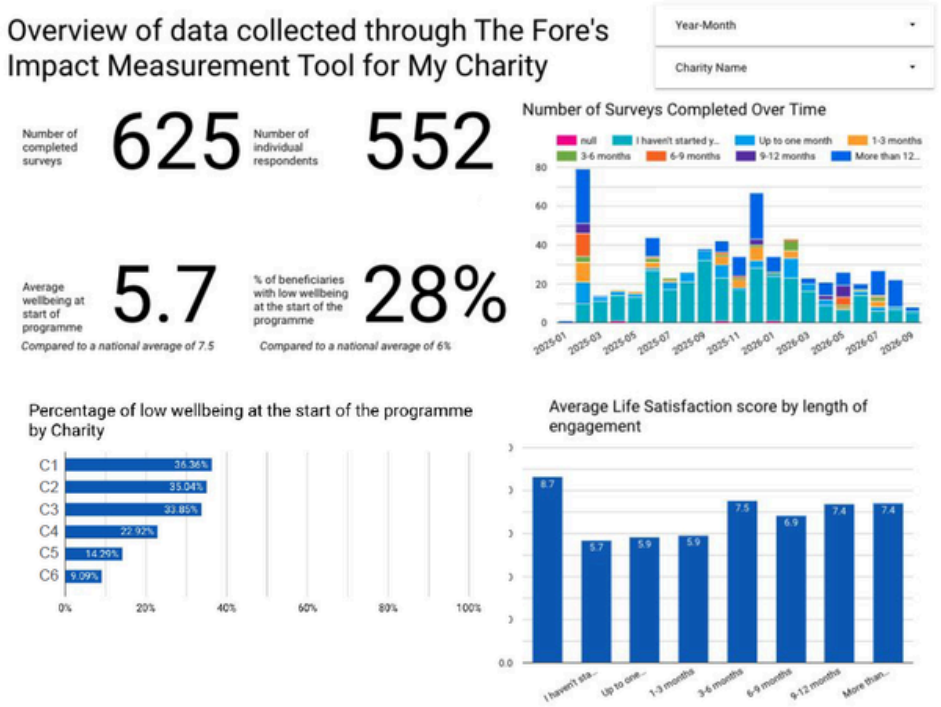
Case study: Using The Fore Impact Index

Safe Soulmates is a charity dedicated to creating safe, inclusive spaces for neurodivergent and disabled adults to connect, build and explore opportunities.

Safe Soulmates saw participants' wellbeing scores rise 2.5 points over six months, while a comparable national group saw wellbeing fall over the same period. Using Treasury valuations, that's over £40,000 of wellbeing value delivered per participant, for a programme cost of just £1,750.

Safe Soulmates used these results in a successful £300,000 National Lottery funding bid – proof that credible evidence can unlock real money for small organisations.

Example of charity dashboard





Performance against stretch targets

81%

Average charity score against stretch targets
Compared to 81% scored in 2024/25

Our charities continue to perform very well against the stretch targets they set themselves. Across the 91 charities that took part in our monitoring and evaluation process this year, they achieved an impressive 81% of their targets – this is in line with the annual average score of 80%. This demonstrates both the resilience of our charities and their ability to deliver against ambitious goals in a challenging operating environment.

How charities invest in themselves

These targets are set by charities in collaboration with our Strategic Applicant Consultants at the outset of each grant. They include a mix of organisational development goals and hard outcomes designed to capture the transformational impact of our support. A breakdown of the categories of target and their performance against them is below. It is an interesting snapshot into what charities prioritise when they are given the power to chose how to invest in themselves through unrestricted funding.

Category of target	Number of targets evaluated	Average score out of 5	Score as a %	Change since 2024/25
Increasing financial sustainability	93	3.67	73%	-1%
Expanding charitable activity	105	4.29	86%	+3%
Increasing organisational capacity	79	4.30	86%	+1%
Increasing efficiency	37	3.95	79%	-3%
Strategic planning	16	3.75	75%	-7%
Total	330	4.05	81%	0%

Calculation note: the overall percentage is weighted across all evaluated targets (1,337 points scored ÷ 1,650 points available = 81.0%). One target recorded as N/A is excluded from the target count and denominator.

Key statistics | 2025/26

21%

growth in total income

24% growth in restricted income

23% growth in unrestricted income

25%

increase in beneficiaries reached

(Total: 1,500,000)

313

additional locations operated in

(Total: 3,589)

25%

increase in programmes offered

(Total: 2,505)

20%

increase in volunteers

(Total: 764)

24%

increase in staff time

Increases are from last year to this year. Percentages (excluding target score) represent median increases. Data derived from our M&E process from Autumn 2025 to Summer 2026.

More information on how we monitor and measure progress can be found on our website.

Things are looking up

For many charities, 2025 was a year of taking stock. Happily this seems to have paid off and we're now seeing signs of recovery across our portfolio. For example, our charities are now growing their programmes by 25%, which contrasts to last year's 19% decrease. This is impressive given our charities' total income growth this year, which has remained steady in comparison to last year. However, progress remains fragile, and it often comes at a cost for already stretched leaders.

Staying true to your roots

Our charities are becoming more selective about the opportunities they pursue. Short-term opportunities can bring valuable resources, but it may shift focus away from strategic priorities. Turning down these opportunities can limit growth in the short term, but it helps charities stay grounded in their mission and grow more deliberately over time.

By staying true to their roots, our charities have increased their reach to an impressive 1.5 million beneficiaries this year. This shows that some of the most effective and far-reaching organisations in the sector are also among the smallest.

Volunteering is a two-way street

Many of our charities have found that investing in their volunteers strengthens their ability to attract and retain skilled volunteering communities. The key to successful partnerships lies in nurturing meaningful, collaborative experiences. It can't feel transactional. This is their recipe to success, as shown in the 20% increase in volunteers this year.

Dive deeper into these insights...

While the numbers show the extraordinary progress our charities have made over the last year, they're only half the story. Explore our Autumn/Winter 2025 and Spring 2026 insights and data reports for a snapshot of the sector through our portfolio charities progress in the last year.

Case study: All Ears Mental Health Awareness

Score against stretch targets: 90%

The challenge

Having been profoundly affected by the loss of her best friend in 2014, Amy Madden trained as a therapist and founded All Ears in 2020. All Ears provides therapy for young people in Wigan, an area with some of the highest suicide rates in Greater Manchester. Unlike statutory provision, they offer therapy for as long as each young person needs it, alongside training for professionals.

The Fore's support

When we first met Amy, she was working too much 'in' the organisation and not enough 'on' the organisation. The Fore's funding enabled her to bring in a Development Officer and additional counsellors to free up her capacity and focus on generating commissioned income.

We then backed All Ears, supported by one of our partners, through our Scale Up Programme. Without a dedicated space, All Ears were limited in how far they could respond to demand. With our support, they opened their first hub, rather than relying on the time restrictions of other venues. All Ears now generates sustainable income through renting out the space, and have developed partnerships with schools and national supermarkets.

The impact

In three years, All Ears have:

- Increased their income tenfold
- Tripled their accredited training courses from two to six
- Reached six times more young people each week and have almost doubled the number of programmes available

There are no plans to stop now. All Ears plan to take the accredited training online, helping more professionals support young people's mental health while generating income to fund even more therapy sessions.

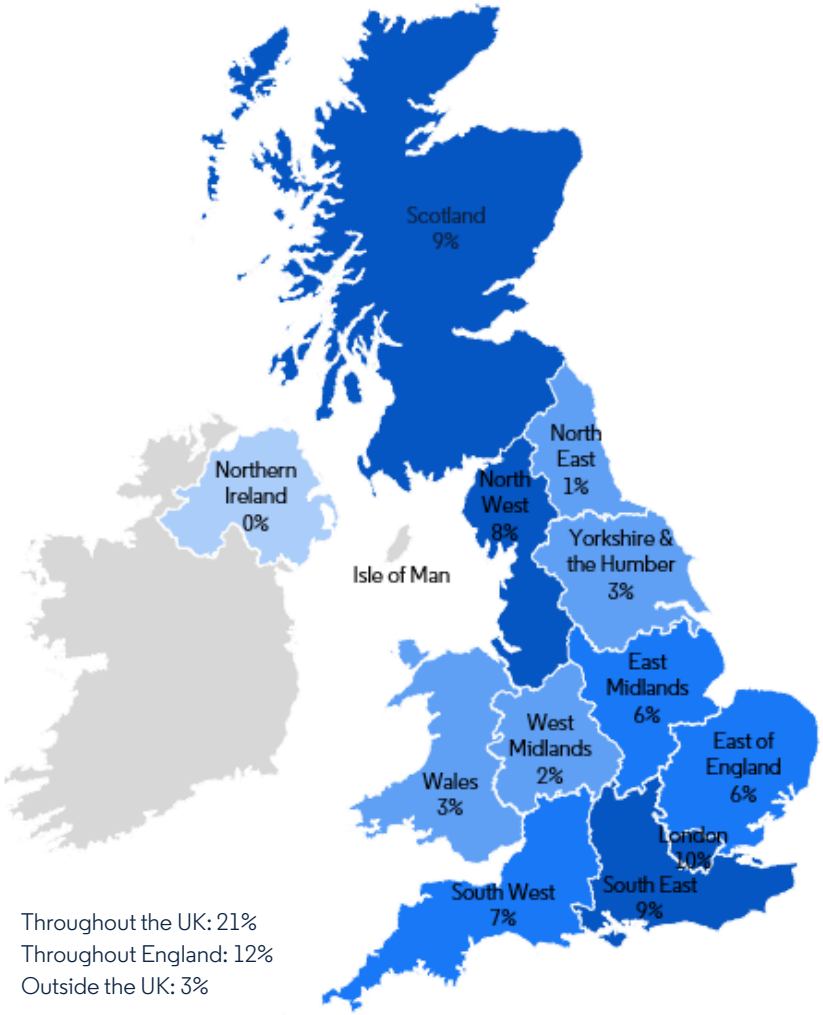


Funding provided | 2025/26

40
grants awarded
Core programme: 36
Scale up programme: 4

£1.73 million
distributed

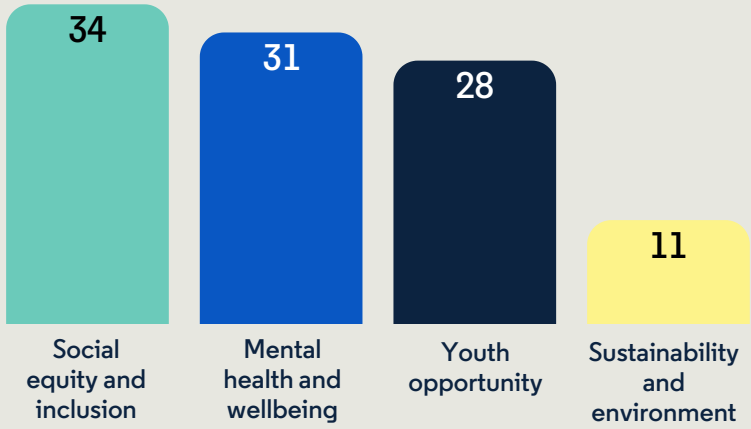
Geographic distribution of charities funded*



Throughout the UK: 21%
Throughout England: 12%
Outside the UK: 3%

*Charities funded work across multiple areas

Key themes of charities funded**



Intersectionality of funding themes

Funding Theme				
	34	26	24	10
	–	31	23	5
	–	–	28	7
	–	–	–	11

**Charities funded work across up to four funding themes

While we see exceptional sustainability and environment charities throughout our pipeline, they continue to be underrepresented across the wider funding landscape. Our dedicated Sustainability and Environment Fund ensures we back the most innovative solutions to the climate and environmental challenges of our time (see p14).

Targeted funding

Ring-fenced funds by theme or geography

Alongside our national funding rounds, we run targeted rounds in areas where we, or our partners, have identified even greater need and opportunity. Our ring-fenced funds bring together aligned partners and sector experts to provide targeted support to grassroots solutions that mainstream funders often overlook.

This year, we ran regional rounds for charities based in the North West of England, alongside our dedicated Sustainability and Environment Fund. We're continuing to welcome additional partners interested in backing solutions across climate adaptation, conservation and restoration, waste management, circular economy, green skills, economic inclusion and community resilience in 2027.

ScaleUp Programme

With a pipeline of over 400 charities from the last ten years, there is significant demand for catalytic follow-on funding. We are delighted to be working with an increasing number of our funding partners who wish to double down on support for individual charities that are ready for significant investment. Applications are by invitation only and a small shortlist is invited to develop a full proposal, supported by business planning and pitch training.

This year, we've awarded two grants of £100,000 and one grant of £45,000 to organisations that are ready for the next stage of their development. All the organisations we consider for further investment show exceptional use of funds and impact performance from their initial grant.

Since beginning Scale Up as a pilot last year, we've awarded £645,000 in funding. All the charities that have been backed have already gone on to achieve significant growth and transformational change within their organisation. The programme adds increasing evidence to The Fore's hypothesis that innovation at the grassroots has potential for nationwide impact with the right funding and support.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Our accessible and equitable assessment process is continuing to level the playing field and we are very proud of the diversity of the leaders we are backing. We remain committed to promoting justice, diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of our work.

This year, 17% of our portfolio charities are global majority led and 20% are disabled led, compared with sector averages of 11% and 17% respectively.

The figures we publish on our website are both cumulative and annual because our sample size each year is relatively small. Our 3-year figures exceed the sector average across the board but we note there have been some fluctuations in individual categories. We monitor our EDI figures closely to ensure these are not indicative of trends.



Supporting our community of funders

This year, in response to massive demand, we have expanded our range of opportunities for partners, philanthropists and wealth advisors to dive deeper into effective giving, maximise the impact of their philanthropy and to help funders just get started!

Funders Collective

Our exclusive Funders Collective brings together a community of new and experienced aspiring funders to explore the opportunities and challenges of backing real social change.

Like everything we do, we do this The Fore way. From sharing tips on the best digital resources to managing disengaged children or sharing stories of the charities that have taught them the most, the Collective is a relaxed, friendly community that is dedicated to learning together.

This year, we hosted discussions on:

- Founder–Funder Partnerships and Power Dynamics
- Family Philanthropy: Passing the Baton
- Spotting the Rising Stars: Identifying Potential and Measuring Impact in Small Charities

Convening the Next Generation

We continue to work with wealth management firms to support the next generation of their clients as they take their first steps into the world of philanthropy. Participants learn about the value of supporting small charities, the fundamentals of best practice in philanthropy, and what it takes to lead change from the ground up.

> **I found the session genuinely inspiring… It reinforced how important it is to be part of an organisation that is making a meaningful difference…**
> – Next-Gen workshop participant, Corient (June 2026)

Philanthropy education

Philanthropy Insights

Our online training is now helping philanthropists give with confidence and impact, and wealth advisors develop the knowledge and language needed to have deeper, more confident giving conversations with clients.

> **I now feel much more confident talking to clients about philanthropy, with a clearer understanding of how to start the conversation in a way that helps them express their values and make meaningful, well-informed giving decisions.**
> – Sabrina Torris, Investment Manager, Evelyn Partners

High-Impact Philanthropy Workshops

> **Giving well requires confidence, insight and support. These workshops help create enabled givers who are better equipped to make a meaningful difference through their philanthropy.**
> – Rennie Hoare, Partner & Head of Philanthropy, C. Hoare & Co.

Our expert-led workshops give practical, strategic guidance to new and experienced philanthropists looking to sharpen their skills in selecting and supporting charities with clarity and confidence. Plus, we share best practice engagement advice that balances the power dynamic by putting charities at the centre of their decision-making.

We continue to work regularly with donor advised funds including Master Charitable Trust at C. Hoare & Co. and Prism the Gift Fund.

Businesses

We are proud to partner with businesses, including investment firms and global corporations, with forward-thinking leaders committed to developing a stronger, better connected and more resilient society.

> **We partnered with The Fore because their mission strongly aligns with our belief in the power of founders and leaders to drive meaningful impact – something we champion every day at Phoenix.**
> – Phoenix Equity Partners

Our flexible partnership models give businesses a unique opportunity to turbocharge a wide range of exceptional small charities and social enterprises all in one place.

From taking part in our funding panels and shaping where support goes, to bespoke volunteering opportunities with exceptional leaders from our portfolio, skilled volunteer webinars and tailored matchmaking events, we help businesses turn intent into meaningful action for communities across the UK.

Watch this video to hear more about our funding panels and how businesses are playing their role in selecting and backing the rising stars of the sector.

> **You can see almost instantly the impact that the grants are going to have and being part of it didn't just give me a chance to use the skills that I've already accumulated, but the opportunity to learn from other people who come from completely different walks of life.**
> – Ellis Goodson, Vice President in Product Development at BlackRock & charity trustee at Success Club

BENEFACT GROUP

PHOENIX

We are delighted to have welcomed three new business partners this year, including Phoenix Equity Partners and Benefact Group, who value the power of visionary leadership as much as we do. Our partners all share our commitment to create meaningful social impact by turbocharging the highest-potential charities and social enterprises in the UK.



Phoenix Equity Partners

Connecting Our Leaders With the Networks They Need

Pro bono network

Our pro bono network connects charity leaders with skilled volunteers, providing them with expertise to strengthen their operations and impact. With backing from our corporate partners, our volunteers offer support in strategy, finance, marketing, HR, IT and more.

117
matches made between our skilled volunteers and charity leaders

125
skilled volunteers recruited to our pro bono network

This year, we've made strides to improve the matchmaking process and the overall experience of our pro bono network.

- Better-matched opportunities: Our monthly round-up of bespoke volunteering opportunities is tailored to the skills our volunteers offer. Clear roles and realistic time commitments make it easier for volunteers to find the right opportunity – and for charities to access the expertise they genuinely need.

- Helping volunteers make their skills count: We launched Skilled Volunteering Webinars to help professionals learn how to share their expertise effectively in a small charity setting. We teach volunteers how to adapt their experience to a new context, work collaboratively, and offer support that is both practical and proportionate.

> **[Our volunteer] helped steer us through a pivotal time of growth as we created and implemented our first-ever marketing strategy. He acts as a dedicated sounding board, suggests fantastic ideas and helps put guardrails and structure in place.**
> – Lilian Longhurst, Street Storage



We matched Catherine Lecavalier, a Business Development Consultant, with The Pachamama Project (TPP), a charity working to end global period poverty.

What began as a short-term review of TPP's three-year strategy and budget has grown into an ongoing mentoring relationship. Catherine now supports decisions on recruitment, finance, systems and team growth. Her support is helping ensure that TPP's growth is not only ambitious, but sustainable.

> **As we move into our next stage of growth, Catherine's support has given me significantly greater confidence that our strategy and financial planning are aligned.**
> – Ella Lambert, The Pachamama Project
>
> **Working with Ella has opened my eyes to the challenges charities are facing. Her creativity and resilience have taught me how to look at problems differently and how to do more with less. Although I am the mentor, I feel that I am learning just as much.**
> – Catherine Lecavalier

Connecting Our Leaders With the Networks They Need



Peer network

Through our peer network, our portfolio charities connect with other charity leaders and people that can help take their organisation to the next level.

> **It is brilliant to connect with so many people doing such amazing work. From addressing climate change, to period poverty and sport-for-good, you can really feel everyone's passion. We have genuinely open, honest conversations – a great reminder that The Fore does indeed approach funding differently.**
> – Amardeep Gill, Disability Sports Coach

Peer connection group

We connected 168 charity leaders through a WhatsApp group (an increase of 28 from last year). This is a dedicated space for seeking peer support with anything from CRM recommendations to recruitment.

Peer dinners

We facilitated 6 peer dinners from London to Manchester, bringing together 37 charity leaders to share the highs and lows of running a small charity, exchange advice from personal experience and, most importantly, enjoy the chance to unwind in a relaxed space.

> **It was a space for organisations genuinely interested in one another's work, generously sharing ideas, experiences and practical advice without competition or self-interest.**
> – Trish Vella-Burrows, Music4Wellbeing

Workshops and skills training

We tailor our workshop programme to meet the unique needs of small charities through partnering with a varied pool of industry experts.

Workshops are delivered on a range of topics, including finance, impact measurement, fundraising, strategy, communications, AI and more. Our aim is to help small charities upskill their teams and, in turn, build their capacity.

85
workshops delivered

1,500
workshop attendees

80% rated the facilitators as good or excellent, 81% said their knowledge in the topic improved, and 83% agreed our workshops offer value for money.

With huge thanks to our regular workshop partners B&G Partners, Embrace Finance, Triceratops Training and Time for Impact, as well as everyone who has shared their expertise with our community along the way.

theWholeStory workshop series

Our charities tell us that telling their story well is one of the biggest drivers of growth. That's why we partnered with storytelling specialists theWholeStory this year as they celebrate their 20th anniversary. They supported over 30 of our portfolio charities across the UK, delivering their signature Sharing the Message workshops pro bono.

> **The training was excellent. It gave us practical tools to think differently about how we communicate our work, moving beyond simply describing what we do to telling stories that connect people with the experiences and issues behind it.**
> – Informing Choices NI

Impact measurement courses

We fund our portfolio leaders to take part in one of two impact measurement courses, depending on their stage of development: Introduction to Impact and Demonstrating Impact: Practice and Innovation. Delivered by Maria Tarokh, these courses upskill our charities and set them up for measuring and communicating their impact more efficiently and confidently.

100%
were satisfied or very satisfied with the courses

100%
said the course met or exceeded their expectations

> **These courses have given me a much clearer understanding of how we can improve and develop our approach. I will take what I've learned use it to refine and strengthen our framework, with the aim of producing our charity's first-ever impact report.**
> – Sydney Barbrook, The Old Hospital (Southwold)



The Chatty Cafe Scheme CIC
#BackedByTheFore

Connections to the wider ecosystem

Thematic showcases

In addition to our existing work to connect our charity leaders and community of funders, this year we launched thematic showcases. This brings our portfolio charity leaders in the same room with funders, policymakers and influencers to showcase the power of grassroots solutions to the UK's most pressing challenges.

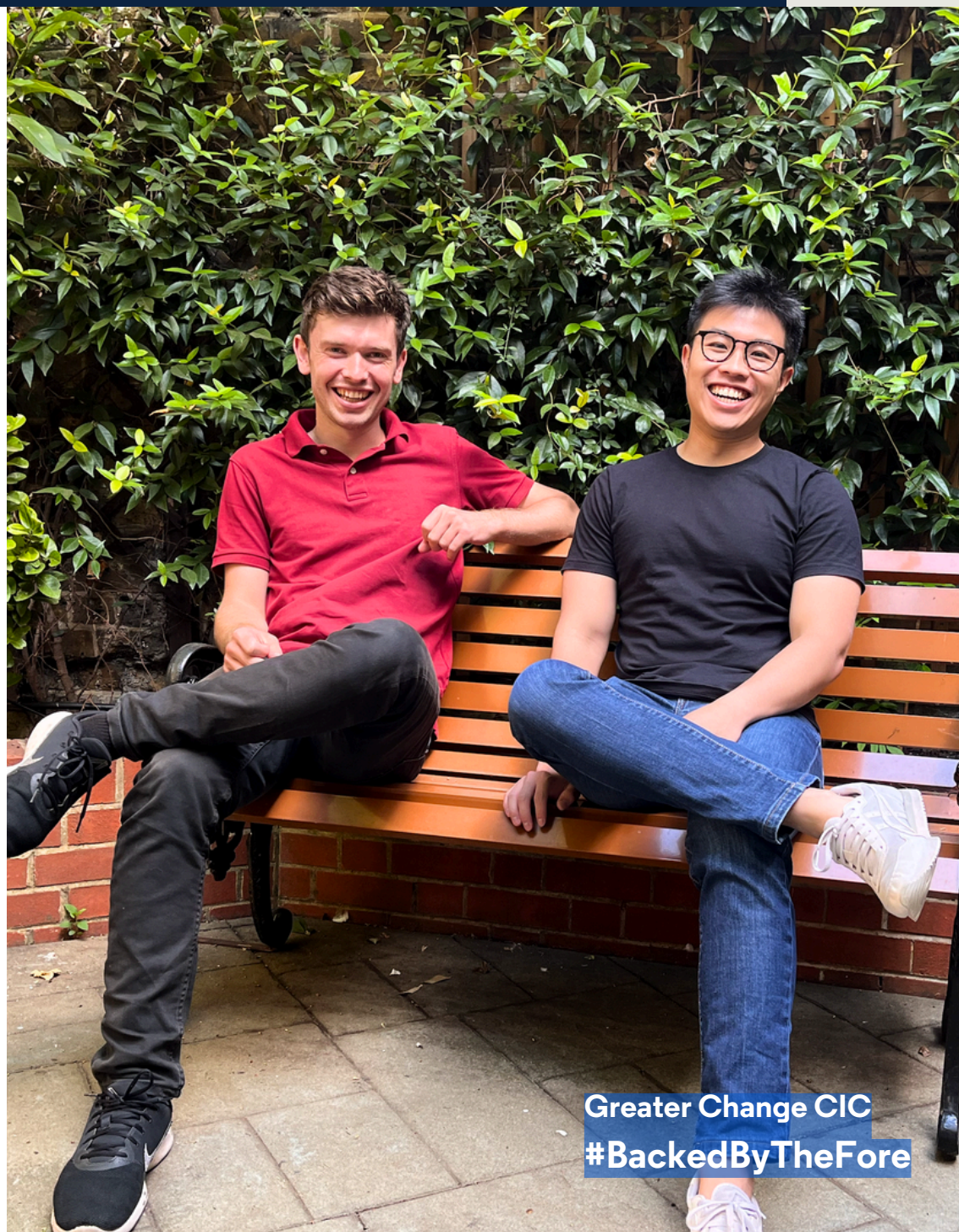
Our pilot showcase, Scalable Solutions to Homelessness, featured three exceptional leaders: Jonathan Tan (Greater Change CIC), Christy Acton (Standing Tall), and Rachel Woolf (Street Storage). Over 50 attendees from The Fore's network gathered to listen and learn directly from these leaders about how they are tackling the homelessness crisis.

Case study: From showcase to even greater change

Founded in 2018, Greater Change's solution is simple but distinctive: personalised cash grants to help people get out of homelessness for good. Their approach prioritises dignity, choice, and empowerment, giving people real opportunities to break the cycle of homelessness.

At the showcase, Greater Change's unique approach caught the attention of a funder. Impressed by their model and potential to scale, they went on to provide matched funding to support Greater Change's growth.

> **We are grateful to The Fore for introducing us to some excellent, smaller charities. Their Homelessness Showcase featured four innovative charities. We were particularly impressed by Greater Change's approach which has great capacity to scale and for which we are now providing matched funding.**
> – Philanthropist Attendee, Homelessness Showcase (May 2026)



Brace For Impact: Philanthropy In A Changing World podcast

We launched Series 2 of Brace For Impact, The Fore's groundbreaking podcast where we champion modern philanthropy in a changing world. We set out to make Brace For Impact the listening platform for individuals and business leaders who want to better understand how philanthropy can drive meaningful change.

Series 2 has seen the podcast go from strength to strength, with guests ranging from thought leaders such as Andy Haldane and Lord Victor Adebowale, to sector experts like Anna Josse, founder of Prism the Gift Fund, and Alexander Hoare, Founder of Snowball Impact Investment and Partner at C.Hoare & Co.

We are delighted that the podcast's popularity has grown significantly over the last year, consistently ranking in the top 20 non-profit charities in the UK through May and June, and reaching number one spot in late May.

Watch or listen to all episodes of Brace for Impact wherever you get your podcasts.



Lord Victor Adebowale and Mary Rose Gunn

Raising The Fore's profile

Speaker engagement highlights

We shared our three principles of effective, high-impact corporate partnerships at the Women Leading Corporate Philanthropy in a Complex World conference, highlighted effective fundraising at the Third Sector Conference, and were invited to present our model at the launch of Eight Point Three, a global collaboration reimagining philanthropy led by Google.org and the Gates Foundation.

Media highlights



Venture philanthropy funding can transform smaller charities

BUSINESS INSIGHT
FINANCE

John Gapper

If Football Beyond Borders were a venture-backed start-up, it would be doing very well. Revenues have grown by double digits for several years to £4.2mn last year, and its product is loved. FBB's lead investors have "got high standards and they make us stay focused", says Jack Reynolds, co-founder and chief executive.

says Mary Rose Gunn, chief executive of The Fore, an early-stage venture philanthropy fund.

The Fore backed FBB in 2016, allowing one of its founders to start working full time and create a business plan. Since 2019, the charity has been supported both financially and strategically by Impetus, a late-stage venture philanthropy fund that was founded by private equity groups and executives. Impetus works with charities that are growing to help them scale further.

Very few charities transcend their roots, no matter how good their ideas: two-thirds of the UK's 171,000 charities have incomes of £50,000 a year or less. Even money they raise in grants and donations is often for a restricted charitable purpose: only 12 per cent of individual donors say they would be happy

executive Susannah Hardyman. That growth journey can be very demanding. Reynolds and his co-founder Jasper Kain spent a year on due diligence with Impact before FBB was awarded its first three-year grant. Impetus also employs a team of investment managers, some of them former chief executives and consultants, who work directly with each charity.

It is easy for charities to get distracted as they attempt to meet the narrow criteria for restricted grants, while spending a lot of time on applications. Impetus encouraged FBB to stop some activities and concentrate on its work in secondary schools. The charity has now started its own creative agency to bring in money from sports brands.

This all sounds rather businesslike, compared with the ideals of charities and their founders. Many social entre-

> **The border between business and philanthropy should become more fluid, as long as it benefits those who need society's help.**
> – John Gapper, Chief UK Business Columnist, Financial Times

- Venture philanthropy can transform small charities
  Financial Times
- Finding needles: The venture philanthropy fund backing grassroots innovators
  Impact Investor
- What investors get wrong when they become philanthropists
  The Armchair Trader
- The begging bowl disconnect between family offices and philanthropy
  Family Capital

Raising the profile of our charities

At The Forefront

Our monthly interview series, At The Forefront, spotlights small charity leaders and social entrepreneurs with scalable solutions to the UK's greatest challenges.

This year, we featured 10 exceptional leaders and welcomed an audience of 84 people per session – our highest average viewer count yet.

Watch or listen to all episodes on Acast or YouTube.

The Forecast

Our monthly newsletter, The Forecast, features exciting skilled volunteering opportunities, small charity insights and upcoming events, and now has over 6,000 subscribers (an increase of 20% in the last year). Sign up here.

The Fore Presents

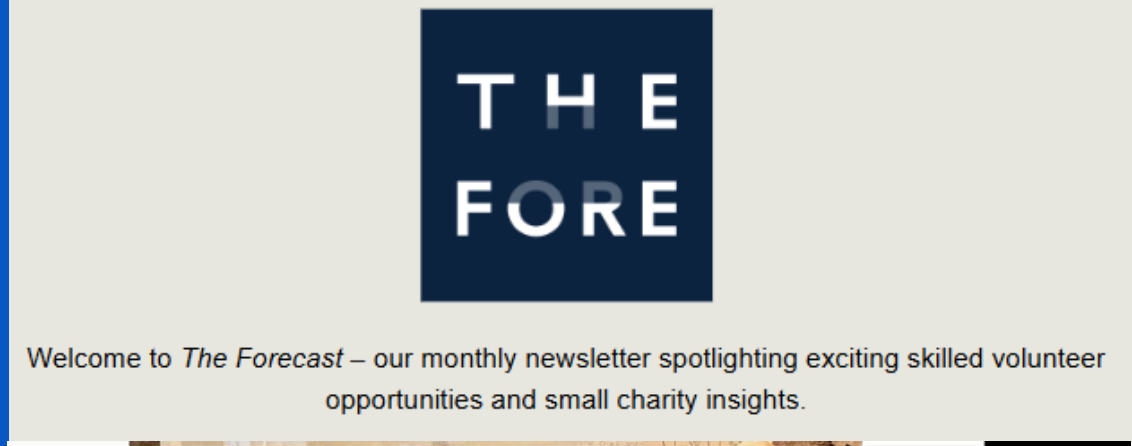
After the success of our inaugural showcase Scalable Solutions to Homelessness, we're excited to launch The Fore Presents – a new three-part online series showcasing innovative solutions from small charities and social enterprises.

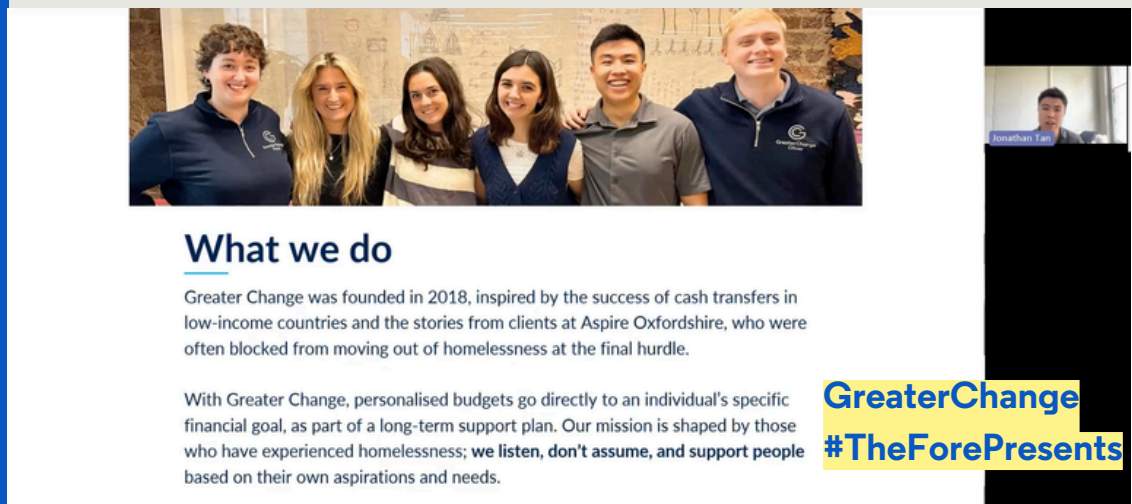
Our upcoming events are:

- Through The Gate (Prison Reform & Rehabilitation)
- Rooted in Change (Nature Recovery)
- Routes to Opportunity (NEET Employability)

Across these events, we'll bring together organisations from our portfolio to share the approaches, learning and solutions emerging from their work – and connect them with funders, partners and other stakeholders who can help take their impact further. Watch this space!









Embracing Arts
#BackedByTheFore

Momentum to nationwide impact

Over the coming year, we will build on the momentum across our community. Grassroots leaders are proving what is possible, funders and businesses are seeking better ways to contribute, and new connections are forming across civil society, business and government. Our role is to connect these efforts so that more exceptional leaders can grow their local solutions to nationwide impact.

Backing grassroots innovation: Our Core Grants and Scale Up programmes will remain at the heart of this work. We will continue to fund high-potential leaders with unrestricted catalytic capital, then back the strongest organisations again when further investment can unlock step change. We will track progress towards nationwide impact and share what we learn, strengthening the evidence that trusted, well-supported grassroots innovation can change systems.

Building the movement: We will bring more people into high-impact philanthropy and give them the confidence to act well. Through philanthropy education and our work with funders, wealth advisers and businesses, we will continue to share best practices and unlock more private funding, skills and influence at the grassroots. We will also grow our pro bono network, helping professionals contribute their expertise in practical, collaborative ways to achieve transformational impact.

Making exceptional solutions visible: We will prioritise visibility and advocacy for the organisations we back. Through The Fore Presents, At The Forefront, Brace for Impact and our wider communications, we will showcase grassroots solutions and connect their leaders with the funders, policymakers, businesses and peers who can take their impact further.

Working together: None of this can be achieved by one organisation or sector alone. We will continue to bring together social entrepreneurs, philanthropists, businesses and policymakers, connecting the funding, skills and influence needed to turn proven ideas into lasting change. Working across traditional boundaries, we can create stronger pathways for grassroots solutions and help shape a more effective funding system. As we welcome a new Chair, we will carry this ambition forward with renewed energy and bring more people into the movement.

The solutions are here. Our task now is to help them travel further, faster.

Full List of Charities #BackedByTheFore | 2025/26

Autumn 2025

Organisation name	Amount funded	Location	Key themes
Darkside Rising CIC	£45,000	East Midlands	
DataKind UK	£44,368	Throughout the UK	
Dementia Information & Support Courses CIC	£45,000	South East	
DFY Sports Limited	£45,000	Greater London	
Disability Sports Coach	£45,000	Greater London	
Embracing Arts	£44,302	South East	
Feeding Futures	£45,000	Outside the UK	
Men Who Talk	£45,000	Throughout the UK	
Metal for Good	£45,000	Throughout the UK	
Next Chapter Scotland SCIO	£45,000	Scotland	
stem4	£40,000	Throughout the UK	
The Pachamama Project	£45,000	Outside the UK	

Spring 2026

Organisation name	Amount funded	Location	Key themes
Alfie's Squad	£44,560	North West	
Balanced Horizon	£45,000	Scotland	
Bassetlaw Food Bank	£44,184	East Midlands	
Brighton Therapy Centre Ltd	£45,000	South East	
Exeter Science Centre	£45,000	South West	
Happy Healthy You Bradford and Beyond	£45,000	Yorkshire and the Humber	
Highlands Psychoanalytic Collective	£45,000	Scotland	
Petallica Flower Farm CIC	£45,000	Wales	
Power 2 Connect	£45,000	Greater London	
The Old Hospital (Southwold) Ltd	£45,000	South East	
WilderMe CIC	£45,000	South West	
Youth Mental Health Foundation CIC	£45,000	South West	

Mental Health and Wellbeing
Social Equity and Inclusion
Youth Opportunity
Sustainability and Environment

Full List of New Charities Backed | 2025/26

Summer 2026

Organisation name	Amount funded	Location	Key themes
Black Men Teach CIC	£45,000	Greater London	
Forests With Impact CIC	£45,000	North West	
Give Your Best	£45,000	Throughout the UK	
Greater Manchester Blood Bikes	£45,000	North West	
Harry's Hydrocephalus Awareness Trust	£45,000	Throughout the UK	
Little Green Sock Project	£45,000	North West	
Natural Neighbours	£45,000	Greater London	
Sports Key CIC	£45,000	West Midlands	
Stable Life	£45,000	Scotland	
The Chatty Cafe Scheme CIC	£45,000	North West	
The Pasty Box CIC	£45,000	South West	
The Swan Song Project	£45,000	Yorkshire and the Humber	

Mental Health and Wellbeing
Social Equity and Inclusion
Youth Opportunity
Sustainability and Environment

Scale Up

Organisation name	Amount funded	Location	Key themes
Grace Enterprises Nottingham Ltd	£100,000	East Midlands	
The Reconnect Education Project	£100,000	Yorkshire and Humberside	
The Sound Waves Foundation	£45,000	South East	

Any organisation proposed for scale up but not awarded funding receives a participation grant. This year, one participation grant was awarded.



With Thanks to Our Partners

A shared vision

Our venture philanthropy model is only made possible through the invaluable support of our partner community. We are thankful to all our partners, whose vision and generosity have helped to turbocharge the impact of the best small charities and social enterprises in the UK.

Alongside those who choose to remain anonymous, we proudly acknowledge:

Aeonian Foundation
Andrea Oliver
BlackRock
Becky Holmes
Benefact Group
Bridget and Justin Barton
Buttinghill Foundation
C. Hoare & Co. (Golden Bottle Trust)
Cheyne Strategic Value Credit
Collective Futures
Epiris
Fergus Chamberlain
Fortescue Family Charitable Trust
Garfield Weston Foundation
The Christopher and Henry Oldfield Trust
Imagine Foundation
Kester Capital
Lauren Gupta
Lyon Family Charitable Trust
Monday Charitable Trust
Phoenix Equity Partners
R&Co4 Generations
Sir Thomas Hughes-Hallett
Stewart Investors
The Mumme-Ackford Charitable Trust
The Netherby Trust
The Neville Abraham Foundation
The Symondson Foundation
The Why
Treebeard Trust
Tye Foundation
UBS

If you are a business or philanthropist inspired by our results and you would like to play a role in creating a society that solves its own problems, we invite you to explore a partnership with The Fore.

Contact our Partnerships Team today: partnerships@thefore.org

The Fore is a charitable incorporated organisation, registered charity number 1204122, whose principal office is at Unit WS.V107, Vox Studios, 1-45 Durham Street, Vauxhall, London SE11 5JH