

# What We Learnt

Sharing information about the needs of the organisations and how these were met

- What We Did
- Who We Helped
- What We Learnt**
- Future Needs



# Introduction

Rebuilding Heritage was a UK-wide support programme designed to help heritage organisations navigate the challenges presented by COVID 19. It was coordinated by **the Heritage Alliance**, funded by

the **National Lottery Heritage Fund** and delivered in partnership with the **Chartered Institute of Fundraising**, **Clore Leadership**, **Creative United**, and **Media Trust**, with support from additional providers.

**'What We Learnt'** shares information about the needs of the organisations that took part in the programme and how these were met.

## Sector Needs

### Building or beginning?

The specific challenges COVID 19 presented to heritage organisations were as unique and as varied as the organisations themselves. However, consultation identified four core areas in which organisations needed the most support, helping them to pivot and adapt in the face of the pandemic:



**Business & enterprise planning**



**Fundraising**






**Marketing & communications**



**Leadership & governance**

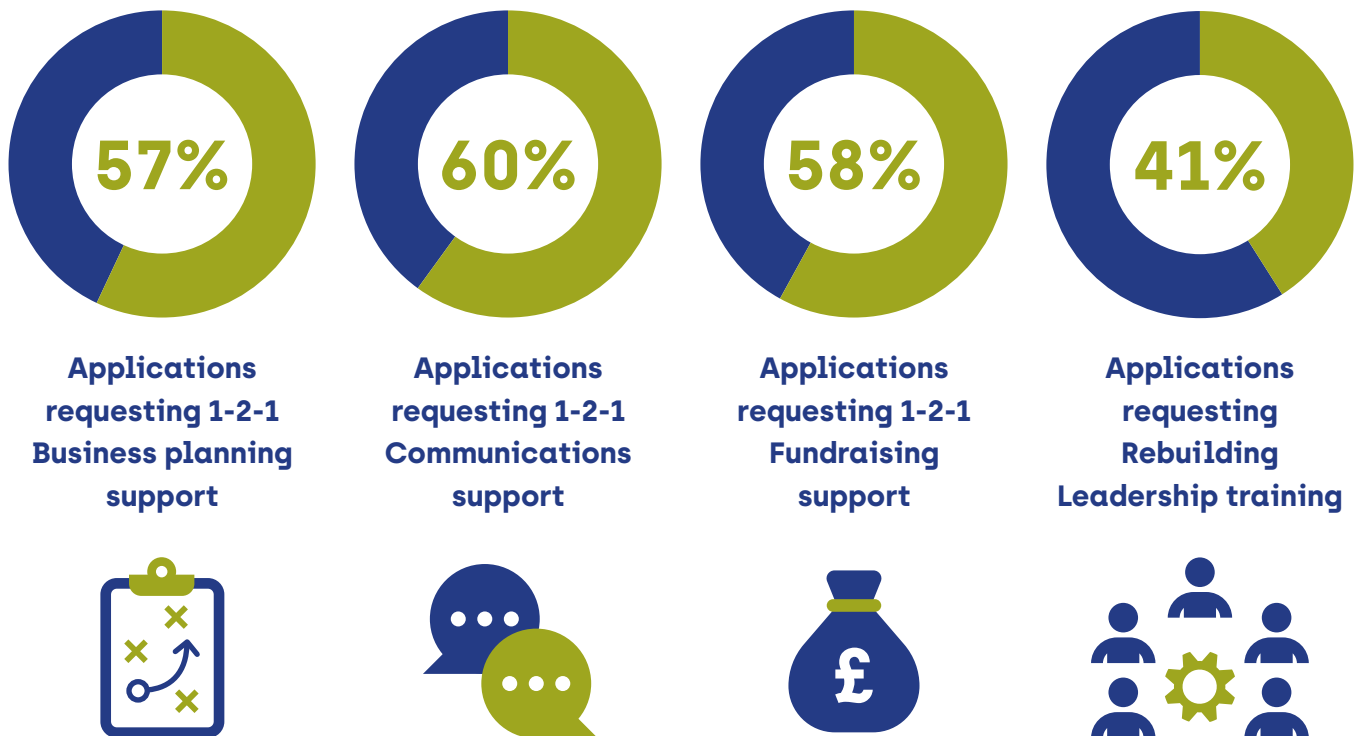
**Low confidence** in these areas and **high demand** for the 1-2-1 and Group Training strand of the programme, revealed a common need for help developing robust plans and processes to underpin organisational activities.

# Confidence

% of applications low or no confidence in	Rounds					
	1 Nov-Dec 2020	2 Jan-Feb 2021	3 Mar-Apr 2021	4 May-Jun 2021	5 Jul-Aug 2021	6 Sep-Oct 2021
 Business planning	45%	63%	49%	51%	45%	N/A*
 Communications & marketing	62%	68%	60%	63%	35%	54%
 Fundraising	53%	55%	47%	49%	33%	50%

\*business planning support was not offered in Round 6 so this data was not collected in this round.

# Demand



\*percentages of total applications across all 6 rounds which requested support in these areas.

In many cases, it was not a question of building but beginning, and the support was used to create plans in the first instance.



**29%**  
of applicants had no  
business plan



**69%**  
of applicants had no  
communications strategy

Furthermore, needs were complex with the majority of applicants requesting support across multiple areas.

**71%**  
of applicants requested  
support in **more than one  
work area**

**12%**  
of applicants requested **all  
of the support on offer** in the  
round in which they applied

A recurrent theme was the lack of capacity for staff and volunteers to increase their knowledge and skills. Applicants noted:

“

“Our budgets mean that there is little or no training available for our staff”

“

“We don't understand the best way of creating a coordinated campaign so that we can reach our target audiences - we're not even sure we know exactly who our target audiences are!

All of our staff and volunteers are self-taught amateurs and 'we don't know what we don't know'.”

”

“

# Quality of Support

## Addressing Participants' Needs

The needs identified were overwhelmingly for **business skills** and not heritage-specific.

Participants valued the opportunity to receive bespoke consultancy, addressing the specific issues they were dealing with. The Rebuilding Heritage team worked to tailor group sessions and webinars to their needs using application and evaluation data to shape content that matched demand.



“

“I was surprised at just how much attention was paid to ensure that the training being delivered was relevant to me and my organisation.”

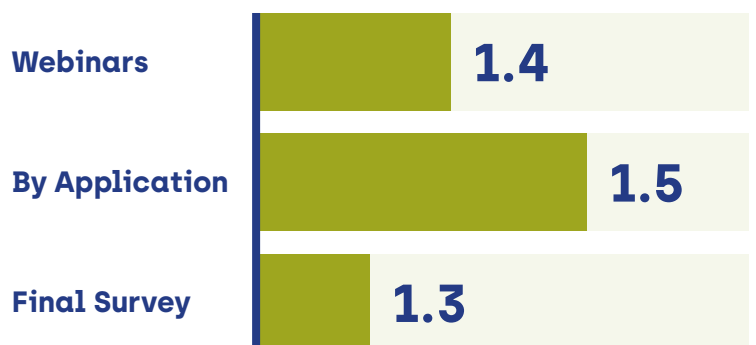
**Round 2 (Jan-Feb) participant evaluation – business support, wellbeing training**

At the end of each element, as well as in the final survey, participants rated the relevance of the support they had received.

**97%**

agreed or strongly agreed content was 'relevant and can be readily applied to my work and organisation'

**Content relevant and can be readily applied to my work**



\*Ratings were calculated by assigning a numeric value to responses as follows: Strongly agree=2, Agree=1, Disagree=-1 and Strongly disagree=-2.

# Feedback

”

“

“It’s been so supportive, excellent quality, and taking part really helped progress my work during this pandemic which created so much uncertainty in our sector.”

**Final survey respondent**

“

“This support is a real privilege to get, especially for those who get it for a role they volunteer for. ”

**Round 1 (Nov-Dec)  
participant evaluation**  
business support, fundraising support,  
leadership training

”

“

“

“We have been turned down for every grant we applied for since the pandemic began and were really starting to flounder. Rebuilding Heritage has rebuilt not just our organisation, but also our confidence and belief in what we do. The application process is simple, the staff are incredibly friendly and the trainers and facilitators are second to none.”

**Round 2 (Jan-Feb) & Rounds 4,5,6 (May-Oct) participant evaluation**  
1-2-1 business, 1-2-1 communications, 1-2-1 fundraising,  
applications training, leadership training

# Take-Up

Over a third of organisations who applied were awarded more than one type of support.

The programme saw repeat attendances across the webinar events.

“

“It was incredibly helpful to talk to an expert about fundraising, I discovered things I didn't know that I didn't know! The application process was very straightforward and there was plenty of availability to make the appointment to fit my schedule.”

**By Application feedback**

”



## 73%

**Webinars only**



## 15%

**Support only**



## 12%

Of organisations and businesses **engaged with both** strands of the programme.

# Networking

As lockdown and homeworking prevailed over the norm, people began to feel isolated in both their personal and professional lives.

An unexpected outcome of the Programme was the social benefit of connecting with peers. This soon became a prominent feature of the programme's group sessions.



“The Rebuilding Heritage Programme was a great resource at a time when we all needed support and advice - but also needed to feel part of something bigger.”

**Final survey respondent**

# Impact

## What were participants able to achieve as a result of the support they received?

### A Catalyst for Change

COVID 19 has been a catalyst for changing how organisations work, pushing them to:

- increase their digital offers
- facilitate caring responsibilities for staff
- implement homeworking.

Rebuilding Heritage used this moment of flux as an opportunity to upskill participants, helping them to weather the short term and become more resilient in the long term.

### Concrete Actions

Final survey respondents were asked to describe the standout element of their Rebuilding Heritage journey.

There were plenty of examples where new learning was quickly applied to solve long-standing problems. Even more gains will be seen over a longer time frame as the advice and training continues to be implemented and acted upon within these organisations.

“

“It was brought home to me earlier this week just how important your support is and how it is valued by others in the organisation.... it really is making a difference, both to my confidence and more practically, to my applications... I’m pleased to announce that we have just received a [grant from a trust] [quite substantial by our standards]... ”

“

“Presenting our forward plan as a financial spreadsheet to be better understood by funders.”



“

“We have learned to promote ourselves better, and gained a number of new ideas for fundraising.”





## Increased Confidence

Participation in the programme **helped people to gain confidence**, as well as skills.

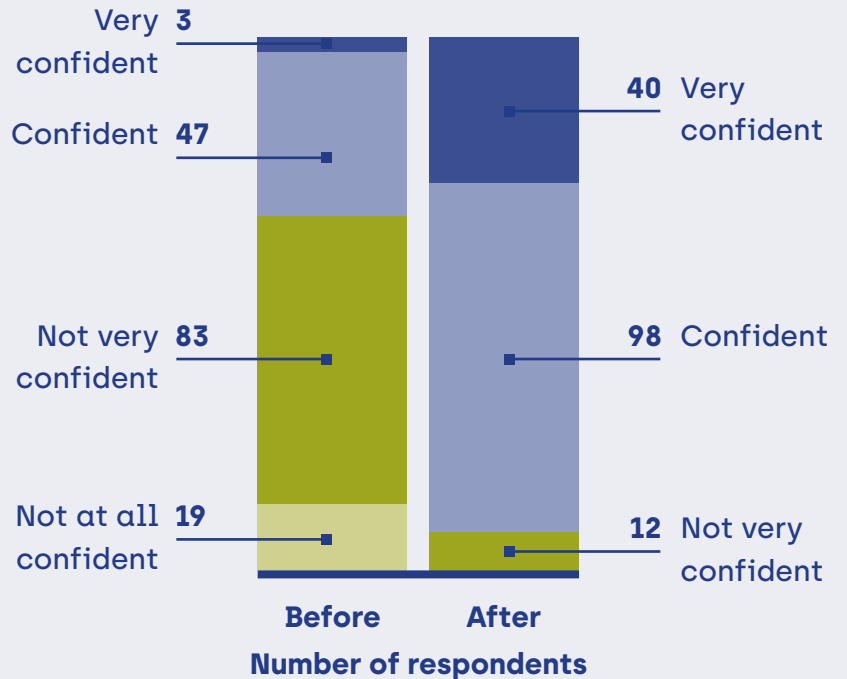
Before taking part,

**68%**

of applicants reported a lack of confidence in their learning. This was reduced to

**8%**

by the time they had completed their Rebuilding Heritage journeys.



“

“This support is a real privilege to get, especially for those who get it for a role they volunteer for. I do feel this has helped boost my confidence as a Trustee and would recommend it to anyone”

**Round 1 (Nov-Dec) participant evaluation**  
business support, fundraising support, leadership training

## Sowing the Seeds of Resilience

Many organisations found that the challenges they faced were not specific to COVID 19, but often reflected **pre-existing vulnerabilities exacerbated by the hardships of the pandemic.**

When asked about the most useful elements of the Programme, many participants referred to the strong foundations they had laid as a result of taking part and how they were **poised to realise the future benefits of those foundations.**

To find all Rebuilding Heritage resources, please visit: [www.rebuildingheritage.org.uk/resources](http://www.rebuildingheritage.org.uk/resources)

Sign up to our mailing list to keep informed about the project's developments: <https://bit.ly/3NaykFi>