



## APPENDIX M

# Addressing Youth Isolation Commissioning Partners



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## Context:

Young people across London faced significant challenges in their everyday lives which impact on their ability to be physically active. Non-sport sector agencies provide valuable service to these young people, but often physical activity is not part of their offer.

## Activity:

London Sport delivered a pilot, commissioning a cohort of organisations focused on using physical activity and sport as a tool to tackle issues facing young people in their daily lives. The pilot focused on the isolation being caused by the pandemic through loss of access to institutions e.g. schools and services that provided them with a sense of identity, and loss of social interactions with peers.

Expressions of interest were generated through a structured open call. Specifically, we delivered a webinar to explain the parameters of the funding and the purpose of the funding stream before opening up to applicants. This included removing the cap on how much a project could apply for in a bid to generate ideas based on the issue not budget, something the trusted partners had identified to us in their feedback.

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## Impact and Success:

Delivering the webinar before opening to expressions of interest reduced the number of submissions that weren't focused on the issue of tackling isolation. This meant that whilst we had less expressions of interest than usual, a higher percentage were shortlisted, and we secured additional funding for a further four projects taking the total up to 12 and an investment of over £100k.

By removing the funding cap we found that expressions of interest became clearer in terms of the wrap around, collaborative approach we were looking for. Very few were wildly over our funding pot, although they were all more expensive per head than other Satellite Clubs, proving the reflections and recommendations from London Youth, Sports and Enfield Voluntary Action correct, that £2,000 was not enough to sustain this type of Satellite Club.

The projects are delivered by a variety of organisations from neighbourhood charities, football foundations, youth services, sport for development charities and the health sector. Each organisation picked one of four learning questions to gather learning against during the 30 weeks of delivery.

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## Challenges and Missed Opportunities:

Reaching non-sport sector organisations was harder due to the change in prioritisation caused by the pandemic, with staff capacity also affected. This meant that instead of developing cohorts and designing Satellite Club provision together we went down an expressions of interest approach. This impacted our ability to build localised collaboration around the Satellite Club to create positive change within the local system supporting young people facing isolation.

The original approach to communicating the development of issue-based interventions was to utilise statistics and stories from the latest research linked to the issue as a means to drive the conversation and reach a wider audience of potential, non-sport sector, partners.

Whilst some organisations had robust approaches to gathering the data to answer their chosen learning question, others submitted plans that were unlikely to unearth learning. We looked to address this by running an impact measurement session with the funded organisations. Most organisations didn't adapt and embed the methods learnt. On reflection we'd now make this a pre-application session so that the question already within the application process on measuring impact would be better informed. We'd also look at opportunities to recruit a central evaluator able to extract learning collectively across a cohort of projects funded to tackle the same social outcomes.

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## Reflections for the future:

- Explore the issue and the learning the fund hopes to generate with the potential applicants, where possible removing limitations (like budget) from their thinking as they develop their ideas.
- Build methods for extracting learning into the organisations planning as delivery is being planned so that it can be part of the programme rather than on top of it.

## Still to Learn:

Current delivery of the projects is still ongoing and will provide an understanding of the role physical activity has in enhancing services and tackling isolation leading to reduction or prevention of feelings of isolation in young people.