



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY GUIDE

Experiences from the SFC Network and beyond



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1. Introduction

Financial sustainability is about maintaining the long term health, security and effectiveness of your food partnership. It is about moving beyond the short term to achieving a more durable and dependable income base. SFC recognises that in the current climate this may seem like a somewhat ambitious goal, as even the best planned, well connected, successful food partnerships can come unstuck when faced with local authority restructuring, budget cuts, shifting government priorities and Brexit! This guide aims to support you to strengthen your financial position and reduce the risk.

When writing this guide we are also very aware of the limited capacity of many food partnerships in the SFC Network. There is often only one part-time member of staff or perhaps none at all. We know that staff may feel that they already have a lot on their plate and don't think they have capacity to consider long term finance. Achieving financial sustainability needs to be the role of the board or steering group as well as the coordinator, and we hope that some of the practical tips and examples in this guide will help with that engagement.

1.1 How does this relate to us?

Financial sustainability will mean different things for different SFC members. Whichever way you are structured: whether you are an independently constituted organisation, housed within the public sector or hosted by a third sector organisation, the essential functions of administering and coordinating the work of your food partnership will need to be resourced in some way. Many food partnerships are also set up to deliver services or projects themselves, so they will be looking to secure funding to deliver these aspects of their work too.

1.2 What this guide covers

The differences between food partnerships means there won't be a one size fits all approach to financial sustainability; a solution for one partnership won't work elsewhere. However, that said, there are some key areas to consider including: strategic planning, income diversification, stakeholder management and communicating success effectively. This guide is not simply about supporting members to write successful funding bids (there is plenty of guidance on that already). Instead it is about asking:

- How can we plan for financial sustainability from the outset?
- How can we best position ourselves to be the recipients of funding?
- How can we diversify our funding mix?
- What are the income generating opportunities that we could be exploring?

To this end, the guide aims to give you practical ideas and support for moving forwards in these areas, drawing on the experience of SFC members wherever possible.

1.3 Who is this guide for?

This guide is for anyone involved in food partnership development. It will not only be helpful for food partnership coordinators but also board members and steering group members looking to enhance the financial sustainability of their partnership.

1.4 Guide structure

- **Section 2** provides a brief overview of the current funding climate together with the funding mix of SFC Network members.
- **Section 3** looks at strategic planning for financial sustainability; examples from Oxford and Brighton illustrate two different approaches. We also take a look at how food partnerships are seeking to manage their stakeholders, align themselves with policy and manage their finances.
- **Section 4** covers a step by step approach to writing a funding strategy, including an outline for a funding workshop.
- **Section 5** highlights the experiences and lessons learnt by SFC members in attracting funding from a variety of sources including private sector (Bournemouth); crowdfunding (London and Bristol); earned income (Greenwich); consultancy (Stockport); food hubs (Durham) and the public sector.
- **Section 6** provides a brief overview of how Food Policy Councils are funded in the US.
- **Section 7** provides links for further information on financial sustainability.

2. National context

The current national funding climate is tough and set to remain that way. This is particularly so for small charities and not-for-profits such as SFC members.

Austerity has led to an extended period of economic uncertainty and contraction. Food partnerships are competing with many other priorities in an era of statutory spending reduction. The Public Health ring-fenced budget which has been the mainstay for many food partnerships is being reduced year on year and is only guaranteed until March 2019. Beyond this the Department of Health Local Government Grant is being phased out as the government consults on a new funding mechanism based on 100% business rate retention by local authorities. Upon introduction of the new scheme public health will be funded by retained business rates. There are many priorities within public health and obesity is not considered a core public health function.

The public sector in general is also moving away from grant funding, towards funding contracts. The increasing size of these contracts has led to an increase in funding towards larger non-profits at the expense of smaller ones. As we draw ever closer to Brexit, so too do we move towards the end of EU funding which has been a substantial contributor to the local food sector in recent years.

With this amount of reduction in the statutory funding sector, philanthropic funds are being fought over like never before. There are many more demands on charitable foundations who themselves have lower incomes and are having to make difficult choices on their priorities. Key trends include a transition from grant to loan finance; a shift towards income generation; and from asking to earning. Whichever way you look at it, the current funding climate is somewhat challenging!

2.1 SFC funding mix

We do not have accurate information on the funding mix for SFC members nationally. Our estimate is that the majority of funding comes from public sector (including EU funds and lottery) or from charitable trusts. In particular many food partnerships are supported with funds from public health budgets as outlined above. A small amount of funding comes from crowdfunding, private sector and income generation. For many food partnerships the funding from the SFC Coordinator Grant (and its associated match funding) is all they have. We also know that food partnerships find it particularly difficult to secure unrestricted core funding and that the 'backbone' / strategic partnership role played by many food partnerships is hard to fund (see section 3.1). The SFC Coordinator Grant was set up to address this gap, but we recognise that this is short term. There can be difficulties when initial grant funding comes to an end and partnerships reliant on grant funding find it difficult to continue without it. Partnerships also find it hard to secure continued funding, rather than funding for 'new' or 'innovative' work.

This picture is similar to that reported on by the recent [Food Issues Census](#) which found that 41% of funding for the civil society sector on food and farming was coming from the public sector. It was also reported that 1 in 5 of their survey respondents were in receipt of EU funds in the previous year. The shortfall when EU funding ends is likely to be significant.

3. Strategic planning for financial sustainability

Given the national context outlined above, food partnerships will need to be ever savvier if they are to achieve financial sustainability for their long term goals. Achieving financial sustainability is about much more than being good at writing funding bids. It needs to be built into the long term strategic plans of your food partnership. This section looks briefly at the strategic decisions and actions that have been taken by SFC members with a view to positioning their partnerships to maximise the potential for financial sustainability. There is a direct link between effective strategic planning and long term sustainability.

3.1 Decisions on organisational structure

Even at the outset, decisions around what structure or form a food partnership might take are being made in the light of the current economic climate. Some food partnerships have decided to set themselves up as infrastructure organisations, providing networking, support and services for their members. In this vein, some are embracing the [‘backbone’](#) organisation model as outlined in the Good Food Oxford example below. Others have gone down the core services route and have positioned themselves to deliver on key local authority contracts. They are multi-functional and embedded in the statutory agenda (e.g. Brighton and Hove Food Partnership). Others still have set up as ‘light touch’ partnerships which provide space for food sector stakeholder collaboration and networking with minimal services or project delivery.

3.1.1 Backbone organisation: Good Food Oxford

Early days

When Good Food Oxford (GFO) initially started out they got a member of staff seconded one day a week from the Low Carbon Hub. Their chair also gave time as a volunteer for a year. Then they managed to get two years of seed funding from a private individual. This was someone originally known to the steering group who was very supportive of the aim of the organisation. During these two years they developed their services. They delivered one off events such as workshops that were funded through Oxford City Council. They also got a grant from the City Council to put on a programme of activities. In addition, the County Council gave them a small grant to develop a healthy and sustainable framework for cookery facilitators.

Facilitator Finder service

As GFO became more established they noticed that people were always coming to them to solve problems. This might be a need to develop a training course, run an away day or organise a workshop for example. GFO identified this as an opportunity to value the role they played strengthening connections in the city. They set up the Facilitator Finder service which matches clients needing activities with facilitators. So for example, GFO might get approached by an organisation wanting to run a session on healthy eating for young people as part of a youth club. GFO would match them up with an appropriate facilitator from their network of 130 members, and the facilitator would then develop a session plan. The costed proposal for delivering the session would include a 20% finder’s fee for GFO. Last financial year they delivered approximately 40 sessions in this way to schools, businesses, charities and community groups.

GFO is keen for a strong network to emerge. They don't mind if a direct connection develops in future between the client and the facilitator, as that would mean they are no longer needed. At the moment the Facilitator Finder service covers its costs and generates a huge amount of reputational value for the network. To date the service has not been promoted beyond appearing on their website and this has been sufficient. GFO members tend to be offering quite different skills and experiences so there haven't been any issues about whether one network member is being used in preference to another.

Away days for businesses

GFO has approached business away days in a slightly more formal manner. They begin by meeting with the business to scope out requirements. GFO then puts a proposal together outlining the programme for the day and talks to possible delivery organisations. The costings for the day include their 20% fee for arranging it. GFO puts together the timings and contracts whilst the delivery partner has to do the risk assessment and make sure they have adequate insurance. After the event, GFO gets paid directly from the business and then they pass on payment to the delivery organisation. GFO also receives feedback from the business on how it went. Again, the service has not been promoted beyond having it on their website. GFO has however, always branded itself to appeal to businesses. They have a very clean and professional image, talk about good food as opposed to sustainable food and try to avoid looking too 'worthy'.

A backbone organisation for collective impact

Since the end of their second year, GFO has been describing itself as a backbone organisation for collective impact. As a backbone organisation their aim is to support and enhance the work of existing organisations around the city to improve the food system; to catalyse new initiatives and collaborations; to encourage more joined up thinking; and to develop research and policy around food. By joining together, network members' work is more powerful and visible to the public and policy makers. Network members have all signed up to the Good Food Charter and made a pledge. GFO has even asked them to abandon their individual organisations' agendas and work together. This collective impact model is where the real power of GFO lies.

As a backbone organisation they provide support and infrastructure to their members in order to pursue a particular common agenda and facilitate cohesive working. This is different from an infrastructure organisation which simply serves the individual needs of its members.

GFO functions include:

Functions	Examples
Guide Vision and Strategy	Oxford Good Food Charter Action Learning Set
Support Aligned Activities	Research Kitchen Oxford Real Farming Conference Local Food Directory
Establish Shared Measurement Practices	Online Resource Hub Map of Healthy Food Outlets Oxfordshire Restaurant Awards
Build Public Will	Low Carbon Oxford Week Oxford Pumpkin Festival
Advance Policy	Food Poverty Report

	Food Access Action Plan
Mobilise Funding	Oxfordshire LEADER Oxfordshire Learning Network Barton Healthy New Town

GFO activities are clustered around three focus areas of ‘good food businesses’; ‘good food for all’ and ‘changing our ways’. They support the work of their members through events; training and resources; catalysing new research, policy and local initiatives; and helping with funding applications. They also have a focus on helping organisations work better together. They monitor and evaluate their activity against backbone organisation criteria.

2017 and beyond

In the first two years it was easy for GFO to provide backbone functions because they had funding for their core development. More recently they have had to be quite savvy. Their full cost recovery model of working now includes their backbone work. So when they do deliver projects, they try to cost their backbone functions into those projects. Their day rates include funding for networking, administration, advocacy, campaigning and contributing to policy. Although GFO doesn’t shy away from project delivery, wherever possible they let others deliver. If, however, they spot a gap that isn’t being filled then they will step in. For example they recently worked with a community café to develop a community cupboard (based on a similar principle to a community fridge). They got funded to deliver the project, but the idea now is to withdraw and not be needed any more. GFO wouldn’t go down the core service delivery route. They would rather go in and put something in place that seems to be missing and then step away.

GFO has recently registered as a company limited by guarantee with an asset lock. Because they work with businesses they can’t say their work is charitable, so in the future they intend to set up a separate charitable incorporated organisation to cover that area of their work.

Fundraising as a backbone

The Sustainable Food Cities Coordinator Grant, matched by Oxfordshire Community Foundation has been great for GFO as it enabled them to deliver backbone work on the 6 key SFC areas. At the moment they don’t have convincing enough income generating services, so the plan for the next financial year is still based on grant funding.

At present they have not wanted to charge a fee from network members for their services. However, they have floated the idea of an annual contribution from them. They suggested £1000 p.a. for large businesses, £100 p.a. for smaller businesses and £10 p.a. for charities. This has been received with a mixed response. Some businesses have pledged to contribute £100 and they have a couple that they are now building a more substantial relationship with.

In the charity sector however, there are a lot of front line organisations that feel uncomfortable giving GFO any of their money. They are not keen to acknowledge that what GFO does is financially worth something to them. Some charities have not even been keen to give £10!

When GFO is looking for funding they couch everything that they do in terms of service delivery. They have never gone for core funding that hasn’t got some service delivery element. However,

when they present on what they do, they talk about their backbone structure and highlight the fantastic work they are doing against all areas of the Good Food Charter.

They have also listed themselves on the [Good Exchange](#) platform which match-makes funders with fundable projects. There is a small fee to pay but this is only the equivalent of paying a fundraiser.

Lessons learnt

The backbone organisation model is a great way to talk about what GFO does, making it coherent and evidenced rather than nebulous and hard to define. It is still difficult to convince stakeholders of the value of GFO's work in financial terms, but it provides a solid base from which to work and from which to develop an understanding of value, both internally and externally.

The most important thing about operating as a backbone organisation is to understand the terms and apply them across all of your activities, and to understand in backbone organisation terms why you are stepping in to deliver work and why you step back to facilitate the network.

3.1.2 Service delivery organisation: Brighton and Hove Food Partnership

Background

Over the years, Brighton and Hove Food Partnership (BHFP) has grown into a multi-functional organisation which includes contracted service delivery. The core work areas are: cookery; community and therapeutic gardening; reducing food waste; healthy weight and nutrition; support for community food projects; and policy and strategy work. These work areas all contribute to the organisational goals to:

- Connect: To be a hub and network builder.
- Inspire: To inspire, support and encourage people to adopt healthier, more sustainable diets and lifestyles.
- Champion: To champion and support community-led food projects.
- Influence: To influence behaviour in large organisations.
- Lead: To operate at a strategic level.
- Care: To be a well-run organization with happy and motivated staff and volunteers.

Whilst the organisation now employs 20 staff and has a turnover of just over £1 million, they did not set out with a particular business model in mind. It has gradually evolved this way and it is only in the last couple of years that their attention has been focusing on strengthening this diverse delivery model.

The majority of staff are funded through project delivery work. However, as they have grown they have increasingly been able to top slice project funds to ensure they have funds to cover core functions, strategic management and policy work. The Director is now largely funded by top slicing project funds. The office management, together with other core skills e.g. finance and human resources are also covered this way. In general they allocate as many costs as possible to projects themselves using a [full cost recovery model](#). As they have grown they have been able to move staff between projects to increase their efficiency. This is particularly true for their community cookery team.

Current funding mix

Their income for 2017/18 was approx. £1,029,000. Of this 52% was from the Brighton City Council Public Health commissioned Healthy Weight Service; 15% was from large grants (£100-250k); 12% from medium sized grants (£50 - £100k) and 12 % from small grants (£20-£50k), 9% from grants (£5 - £20k) and approx. 1% from rent, fees etc. Their [Harvest Programme](#) is funded by the Big Lottery Reaching Communities fund and they have Esmée Fairbairn Foundation funding for their policy work. They have no core public health funding although they did receive funds from public health (formerly Health Promotion) in the early days of setting up.

Future funding strategy

Since 2016, the BHFP has been looking at ways of developing a more sustainable financial model. They are heavily dependent on the Healthy Weight Referral Service and recognise that they need to look to diversify their funding mix. In particular they are looking at new ways of generating income.

Food Partnership staff and Board members met in March 2017 to review the organisation's funding situation, past work and opportunities going forward. Staff contributed on strengths and weaknesses of the funding approach and identified what worked well, what was working ok and what was working less well.

Things working well for them included their ability to design good quality funding bids and their strong track record of delivering successful projects. They recognise their ability to be a strong lead partner on bids and their success at attracting smaller grants to complement their larger funded programmes.

Things working less well included: their lack of knowledge on donor campaigns; the levels of administration required for some smaller grants; the impact on staff of short term funding; their limited amount of earned income; and the difficulty of finding alternative large funders for core activities.

They also spent time identifying the pros and cons of different types of funders e.g. contracts; large, medium, small grants; corporate funding; loans; individual giving. They gave the different types of funding scores based on scale, size of funding, amount of time and effort to apply, previous experience, likely success and longevity. This funding workshop along with additional management meetings led to the creation of their Funding and Income Generation Action Plan which outlines the steps they will take over the next 3 years to increase their financial sustainability.

Generating earned income: Community kitchen

A key element of their plan to increase their earned income is the establishment of a community kitchen in a shop front setting on a busy main road in central Brighton. College students have just started work on the refit of the old credit union premises. The plan is to offer a range of cookery courses to meet a wide range of needs, with some cross subsidising others. The kitchen will also be available to rent.

They recognise that culturally many of their staff are used to delivering services that are free at the point of access and it may be a difficult transition for some towards selling goods and services. They are also mindful of how dynamics within the organisation work when some staff bring money in through earned income and others are fully grant funded. They have needed to make sure that each aspect is equally valued but also recognise the different work cultures involved.

Registration as a charity

As part of the drive to secure more financial stability the BHFP is in the process of applying to become a charity (currently the organisation is set up as a company limited by guarantee with a not for private profit constitution). In some respects, becoming a registered charity might present more constraints e.g. increased reporting and more regulation. However with funding becoming more and more difficult to obtain, there are some funds only open to charities which they would like to tap into. They will also be able to benefit from gift aid and be in a better position to receive donations. If they are to attract individual donors it will be helpful for people to see the Food Partnership as very clearly charitable. They feel that some of their projects, for example the [Casserole Club](#) and the Community Kitchen lend themselves very well to individual donations / crowdfunding.

Communicating success

The BHFP has been working with the New Economics Foundation to explore how they might standardise some of their outcomes to enable them to evaluate their overall approach across the whole organisation. This would enable them to speak more powerfully across all projects about the impact of a food systems planning approach. They know that the way they deliver services adds value but they don't currently shout enough about what they do and how they do it. They are working to strengthen their evaluation processes to facilitate better communications and messaging about the impact of their work.

Lessons learnt

- One of the most challenging areas is the need to tread the line between being a contracted deliverer of services and being a critical friend. The BHFP is currently very good at this, but it requires particular skill.
- It is helpful to have a propensity to take calculated risks.
- Establishing really good relationships with your funders and project partners is crucial. The Food Partnership now has a track record of delivery that can be traded on. Even if you are a multifunctional organisation it's important not to just follow the money. You need to be slightly opportunistic but always within the parameters of your overall strategy and work plan.

3.1.3 Light touch partnerships

With limited resources, many food partnerships established in recent years have taken a 'light touch' approach. They have been keen to remain small and nimble partnerships that have less far to fall if funding becomes an issue. Their focus is on providing space for food system stakeholders to gather and share thinking around common goals and ethos. Project work is taken forward by individual partners rather than the partnership itself. These typically have minimal overheads and staffing.

3.2 Alignment with local strategies

An early task for emerging food partnerships is to review existing local policies and strategies and identify synergies with the vision and aims of the developing sustainable food strategy. This might include looking at local strategies on climate change; health and wellbeing; local plan; environment; economic development and the corporate plan for example. Delivery of action on sustainable food is likely to deliver health, social, economic and environmental outcomes which are already identified as local priorities. The more you can demonstrate how delivery of the food strategy or action plan will contribute to delivery of other strategic outcomes the better you will be positioned to receive

statutory support. It can be helpful to cross reference your outcomes with these other strategies to demonstrate this. Presented simply, this could be a powerful tool for positioning the food partnership centre stage. See [Brighton and Hove food strategy](#) (pp12-13), [Islington Food Strategy](#) (Appendix B), or [Bath and North East Somerset Local Food Strategy](#) (p.6) for examples of food partnerships that have done this.

Of course, highlighting the synergies with other strategies and outcomes is only the first stage. Over time you will need to be able to demonstrate your impact on these if you are to make a strong case for investment. For further information on measuring the impact of sustainable food systems see [Making the Case](#), which should help you to build up qualitative and quantitative evidence of your impact.

3.3 Stakeholder analysis and managing relationships

Taking a pro-active approach to managing your relationship with stakeholders is another powerful way in which food partnerships can position themselves to receive funding. By engaging the right people in the right way in your food partnership you can make a big difference to its success. Hopefully, if you have already engaged broadly in the development of your food strategy and action plan then you are already well positioned to build on this stakeholder engagement. By communicating with stakeholders early and frequently you can ensure they fully understand the food partnership and the benefits it brings.

A stakeholder analysis will help you identify your key influencers and opposers and enable you to target your effort on influencing key people that need to be won over. The first step is to identify who your stakeholders are (all the people that are affected by the work of the food partnership, who have influence or power over it, or have an interest in its successful implementation). Stakeholders can be organisations or people – but ultimately you need to communicate with people, so try to identify the correct individuals within an organisation. The next step is to map out what their power, influence or interest is. This is most easily done using an interest / influence grid. Lastly you need to identify which stakeholders are most important to you so you can work out how to win their support.

Stakeholder interest / influence matrix

High			
Interest in us	Keep satisfied	Encourage and influence	
	Monitor	Keep informed	
Low	Influence over us		High

3.3.1 Stakeholder analysis: Brighton and Hove Food Partnership

As a partnership we felt that our partners and stakeholders are our most precious asset. We felt we were spending a lot of time managing a number of different types of partnership – service delivery partners, referrers, ‘champions’, food strategy partners – plus trying to be good partners ourselves and sit on various other Boards and partnerships, as well as respond helpfully to partners’ requests. It seemed important to take a more strategic look at how we allocate this time and where we should focus our energies.

Staff and Board members of Brighton and Hove Food Partnership met to analyse our stakeholders. We began by listing all the stakeholder organisations in each category e.g. council, community, international and non-profit. These were then mapped onto the grid (as above) to reflect their current interest in the food partnership versus the power they have to achieve the food strategy outcomes. We made the following decisions about priorities:

- **Organisations with little interest and little power over the agenda:** don’t prioritise effort.
- **Organisations with high interest but little power:** keep informed. E.g. newsletter
- **Organisations with high interest and high power:** these were our key stakeholders which we will manage closely. We later used a staff away day to think in more detail about how these organisations could be kept at this level of engagement.
- **Organisations with high power but little interest:** this is where we decided to focus our attention most. From the organisations in this category we pulled out two priority groups of stakeholders to target - health and large caterers and procurement teams. There were also three further groups that could be targeted in future - organisations with agricultural land; local food producers, deliverers and retailers; and local economic development.

Lessons learnt

- Some community projects were felt to have little power individually but to have greater power as a group so they appeared in more than one sector of the grid.
- The prioritisation exercise was useful as we often feel that we spread ourselves too thinly.
- There is still a need to be flexible and responsive when new partners and relationship possibilities arise.
- The exercise highlighted the importance of choosing our partners well and the need to make everyone that we work with feel like a partner to achieve a sense of community.

3.4 Managing costs

Good financial management is a fundamental part of any strategic approach to financial sustainability. Many food partnerships look for people with financial experience to form part of their governing body; this is particularly the case if you are an independent food partnership that needs to produce accounts for Companies House for example. For many food partnerships the financial management function will be played by the host organisation e.g. local authority or third sector organisation. For others, they rely on the sometimes limited experience of staff or volunteers.

Many Councils for Voluntary Services employ a community accountant who can offer practical help in setting up financial systems. If this is not available you may be able to access online support. [Knowhownonprofit](http://knowhownonprofit.org) has a section on its website on financial management with guides on the basics

of finance strategy, budgets and measuring financial performance. Community accountancy services exist all over the UK and their aim is to help not-for-profits, social enterprises as well as charities to manage their finances. Learn about the [Community Accounting Network](#) and how they can help. The Institute of Chartered Accountants also runs a [volunteering website for accountants](#). You can advertise vacancies, e.g. for treasurer, for free.

One important aspect is to be able to clearly calculate the full cost of your service including overheads. So the project costs will include a contribution to lighting, heating, management, insurance etc. This full cost recovery model should form the basis for any grant applications or tenders being submitted. The model is well documented elsewhere such as in this [full cost recovery guide](#) and so won't be covered here.

4. Developing a sustainable funding plan

The strategic conversation that goes on across the food partnership around funding is as important as the funding plan itself. A sustainable funding workshop can be a great way to involve a wide range of stakeholders in this important issue. The workshop might involve thinking about the way you've been funded to date; acknowledging the positive and negative experiences of that funding set up; considering work coming up over the next two years or so; looking at opportunities, options and risks to different funding sources; exploring options and developing a funding strategy. This section follows a step by step approach to creating a sustainable funding plan. This process includes both evaluating previous experience and forward planning, so will be more suited to more mature food partnerships rather than those just starting up. The steps are based on a process developed by Food Matters for the Brighton and Hove Food Partnership.

4.1 Step 1: Research

Begin by gathering background information which will help to set the local funding context within which you are operating. This could include both desk based research and knowledge gained from local networking.

Ask yourself:

- Do we have a clear understanding of our aims and objectives as a partnership?
- Do we have a good idea of the current position of our partnership in relation to achieving our aims and objectives (A [SWOT analysis](#) could be useful here)?
- Do we have a full understanding of our costs and assets?
- Where does our money come from now and in the past? How likely is it to continue?
- Do we have a clear picture of our current funding mix? Is all the money from one funder?
- Do we know what activities we want funding for both now and over the next 2-3 years?
- Do we have a good knowledge of the range of potential funders and their priorities?
- Are we well networked with local funders and aware of forthcoming opportunities?

4.2 Step 2: Discuss

It is helpful to engage steering group members or board members in a discussion about funding as well as food partnership coordinators and other delivery staff. You could set aside time during a steering group meeting or get together and focus on the issue for a few hours in the form of a 'funding workshop'.

Possible funding

A useful starting point is to discuss the full range of funding available to your food partnership to gain a good understanding of what is possible. Your list might include:

- Public sector (grants and commissioned services, local authority, NHS, Big Lottery).
- Private (contracts or donations from businesses, sales to businesses e.g. consultancy, commercial sponsorship).
- Third sector (charitable trusts and foundations).
- Individuals (large and small, one off and regular, membership fees, crowdfunding, sales to the public e.g. food, publications).
- Local (range of organisations locally that raise funds e.g. churches, schools, groups).

Some funding sources may never be right for your food partnership. What's important is that you explore the full spectrum and decide what's right for you, your beneficiaries and your long-term objectives.

For each type of funding ask yourself:

- What scale of funding is available?
- How much time is involved in obtaining it?
- What previous experience do you have with this type of funding?
- What is the likelihood of success?
- What is the longevity of this funding?

Scoring each type of funding against these criteria will quickly give you a shortlist of perhaps 5 or 6 funding options to focus attention on.

Matching funding with work areas

Once you have a clear picture of possible funding options you can start to match your current and future work (over the next couple of years or so) with potential funding options. It's a good idea to start with your highest priority work areas and work backwards.

For each area of work ask yourself:

- What needs to happen for this funding approach to work?
- Who needs to take a lead in making this happen?
- Who has the capacity and skills to make it work?

Funding values and principles

There are many different sources of funders, donors and grant providers out there. Some funding may have strings attached or come with other associated baggage! You may find it useful to consider where your food partnership draws the line based on who you are, what you stand for, who you represent and the type of organisation you want to be.

Ask yourself:

- What are our values / principles around funding?
- Who will we not take funding from?
- Which principles are most important to us?

Building capacity

Once you have an idea of the funding that you want to prioritise, you will need to look at whether your food partnership has the necessary skills and capacity to make the most of the opportunities.

Ask yourself:

- What skills do we need as an organisation?
- Are we currently able to make the most of the range of funding opportunities?
- Do we have the necessary skills and capacity?
- What are the options for increasing our capacity?
- Can we develop capacity and build responsibility in current staff / governing body?
- What do we need to do to work together more on this?

Workshop outline

This [funding workshop agenda](#) designed by Food Matters may help you plan yours. This is just an example, so you will need to tailor yours to your specific needs. For more help and support on this contact the SFC support team.

4.3 Step 3: Plan

The funding plan itself is simply the write up from the discussion that you have had. You may decide that your initial draft plan needs further consultation with food partnership members. There are a variety of formats that you might want to use or make up your own. As a guide you might want to consider sections on:

- Introduction, aims, objectives of the food partnership
- Current funding mix
- What has worked well / less well in the past
- Pros and Cons of the different funding types
- Priorities for moving forwards, including priority projects for different funding types
- Next steps and timeframe – this could take the form of a funding action plan and would include planned grant submissions, tender opportunities, building relationships, trialling new approaches e.g. earned income, piloting crowdfunding, approaches businesses etc.

As the plan begins to be implemented it would be useful to schedule a regular review of it, so that it can be updated and modified if necessary.

Ask yourself:

- Is the plan too ambitious?
- Does it need revising?
- Do we need more help or training?
- Are the projects financially viable?

5. Funding diversification: experience from the SFC Network

This section draws on the experience of SFC members and tells the story of their experiences of different sources of funding; pros and cons; time implications; highlights and lowlights; top tips for other SFC members and lessons learnt along the way.

5.1 Private sector funding

5.1.1 Bournemouth and Poole Sustainable Food City

Early days 2014 - 2016

When Bournemouth and Poole SFC (BPSFC) were first setting up as a food partnership they had a focus on the hospitality sector in Bournemouth and Poole and its relationship with the local producer base in Dorset and the New Forest. They got to know a lot of hospitality businesses who were keen to form a network around local food. One of the hotels that they were working with had won numerous awards for sustainability and was very much in keeping with BPSFC aims. At the time BPSFC were applying to Phase 1 of the Sustainable Food Cities programme (funded by Esmée Fairbairn Foundation) and they needed to find match funding. They prepared an outline of what they wanted to do over the following 3 years and asked the hotel if they could offer them £1k per year of the programme. In return BPSFC would put the hotel's logo on their literature and promote their business as part of the food partnership. After some deliberation, they said yes.

This hotel was part of a broader sustainability initiative in Bournemouth called 'Green Goals' which involved a number of hospitality businesses. The hotelier suggested that BPSFC talk to those businesses too. So they approached another 8 businesses, both individually and through a group presentation. Again they were asking for £1k per year for 3 years (2014 -2016). Being able to say that they already had one business signed up was very helpful. Of those 8 businesses, 5 agreed to fund them and 3 said no. Of the 5 that agreed to fund them, 3 gave them £1000 per year as requested and the other 2 gave them £3000 per year. One of these was a large local shopping centre which was close to areas of deprivation where BPSFC were actively working on community garden projects. As an influential local business, their offer to BPSFC was part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) policy. The funds from all the businesses came with no strings attached so BPSFC could spend it however they wanted.

Business accreditation scheme

A core element of BPSFC's 3 year programme was the development of a business accreditation scheme, through which they award businesses for doing great things around food. They send businesses their '[partner guidelines](#)' which outline how they can achieve an award of excellence in sustainable food. This provides recognition of their achievements as well as opportunities for promotion as part of the food partnership. This raises BPSFC's profile with businesses really well and provides them with an instant network of businesses that they can tap into and who are familiar with their work. It sort of glues everything together and has been influential in positioning them to work with businesses.

A new approach 2017

Of the original donors, all except one continue to be involved in the food partnership either by making cash donations or by donating goods and services e.g. by providing compost and top soil to

all community food growing projects. However, now that BPSFC has a more developed programme of activities they have found that their business partners are keen to be associated with a particular aspect of their work that closely aligns with their CSR policy, rather than simply funding the overall approach. As a result BPSFC now has more of a focus on what they can offer them and how they can develop a mutually beneficial relationship. They look at their CSR policies and their 'Health and Wellbeing' policies for their staff and work out how they can help them deliver on these. For example, they have a horticultural site where they can host staff events and they have an online pop-up farmers market so they can provide them with fresh local produce.

It is time consuming building relationships with business, so BPSFC is now aiming to have more funding from fewer companies. Initially they plan to use this new approach to target one large business. Alongside this they have also partnered up with a renewable energy 'switching' company and get a commission cut for any introductions they make. Funding from businesses currently accounts for approximately 15% of their overall budget.

Applying for charitable status

BPSFC is currently a company limited by guarantee and is applying for charitable status. This is primarily driven by the fact that many of the businesses they want to work with prefer to work with recognised charities for their CSR work.

Lessons learnt

- It is important to know how you fit a business's brand values. BPSFC spent time working on their core values, mission statement and strategic priorities. It is now easy for businesses to know who they are and what they stand for. Their strategic priorities span 7 years so this gives businesses confidence in the direction they are going.
- Be really clear about what you are offering and what you want to achieve.
- Don't be embarrassed about asking for money / resources. Be proud of what you are delivering; you don't need to be apologetic.
- Fundraising from businesses is time consuming and there will be knockbacks - but it's about doing your research and approaching the right businesses.
- Having support from one business made it much easier to get others on board.
- BPSFC board discussed the potential issue that might arise if they are offered money from a business that doesn't sit well with their mission. At present they have decided to proceed on a case by case basis.

5.2 Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project by raising many small amounts of money from a large number of people, typically via the internet. People who like the idea either donate money or pledge money in return for a reward that they'll receive once your project succeeds. There is much guidance already on the internet on how to run a successful crowdfunding campaign. See crowdfunder.co.uk for guidance documents on planning your campaign; creating your online project page (including top tips for creating rewards) and running your project.

5.2.1 London Food Link: Jellied Eel

London Food Link (LFL) decided to raise funds through crowdfunding in order to turn their [Jellied Eel magazine](#) into an online magazine platform. The decision to crowdfund was partly taken

because they thought it would be difficult to attract grant funding for this type of venture and partly because they knew they had a strong network of people that would be able to offer rewards. LFL invested quite a lot of time securing a range of rewards and set their fundraising target in response to the value of these rewards. Rewards included cookbooks; gift bags of beer; meals for two; training; and an invite to the end of campaign party. As well as securing rewards, they also managed to pull in lots of favours; for example their online campaign video was created for them for free by a volunteer. As well as the online crowdfunding campaign they also organised a fundraising meal for 30-40 people and charged £30 per ticket. In total they raised about £5k online and £3k through the meal and party.

Key lessons

Time commitment

It required quite a significant time commitment involving 3 members of staff and volunteers. During the actual campaign which ran for 6 weeks it was all consuming, although they were all still doing their day jobs. If they were running it again they would have only run it for 4 weeks so as to reduce the time they spent 'consumed'!

Opportunity to test a new approach

The crowdfunding campaign was a safe way to test out a new approach towards increasing their income generation. This was the first time they were asking individuals for money. So it was a bit like dipping their toe in the water and they can now build on what they have learnt.

Building their relationship with their supporters

The crowdfunding campaign also helped them to learn more about their network of supporters. LFL realised that some people weren't particularly interested in the rewards, but wanted to help out through donating. They can now build on these relationships. The fundraising meal and party at the end were great opportunities to get to know people who may have been signed up as supporters for a long time, but whom they had never met. In some ways crowdfunding is more about building a supporter base and not so much about the money.

The importance of a social media strategy

LFL has an emailing list of 4,500 people and this was crucial to their success. But the experience also encouraged them to develop their social media strategy both during the campaign and beyond. You need good photos, assets, lots of people to read posts, share and retweet. If done well, they realised they could significantly enhance their profile on social media. It also made them think carefully about how to tell the story of the people they support and how they really benefit people.

It would be easier crowdfunding for a more tangible project.

Fundraising to put a magazine online was quite a difficult sell. That being said, they still managed it and it has given them more confidence if they were to have a more tangible project in the future.

5.2.2 Bristol Food Network: Get Growing Garden Trail

Bristol Food Network raised £3k for a 'Get Growing Garden Trail' through crowdfunding. The fundraising was part of a city wide coordinated 'Better Bristol' crowdfunding campaign organised by Bristol Green Capital Partnership. It used the crowdfunder.co.uk platform and offered match funding for the first projects across the city to hit the midway point in their crowdfunding target, till their match funding pot of £40k ran out. Projects also benefited from being part of a well promoted high

profile campaign. Bristol Food Network secured donations from approximately 100 people to reach their target.

Lessons learnt

- You will really benefit from having a team approach rather than doing this on your own.
- Crowdfunder.co.uk provides useful materials and offer ongoing support during your campaign.
- Having a good Facebook profile and connections will put you in a strong position.
- Have people primed to put up donations at the start of your campaign as it really helps to build confidence for others to donate.
- Doing it for the first time can feel a little painful! You are putting your ideas out there into the void; you don't really know how well they are being received.
- Being in a food network puts you in quite a good position for generating rewards e.g. exclusive tours of food growing projects / orchards. These don't cost the contributors anything other than time.
- We managed to attract a couple of significant rewards e.g. Bristol Zoo animal experience. To make the most of this we arranged it so that anyone donating £10 got entered into a draw.
- If you are going down the 'all or nothing' route (i.e. if you don't meet your target income you can't claim any of the donations) as we were, you might want to consider how much money your organisation could put into the pot as the closing deadline approaches. It would be very frustrating to come close to reaching your target and then to lose everything.

5.3 Earned income

As grant funding becomes more difficult to obtain, many SFC members are starting to explore ways of earning a greater percentage of their income. As it stands, earned income is still a very small portion of the overall funds for food partnerships and the experience of SFC members is somewhat limited in this area.

Consultancy

Many food partnerships earn small amounts of money through consultancy work. This tends to be ad-hoc, delivered by the Coordinator, based on their particular skill base and built on the back of their established reputation and connections. The case study on Foodsync below illustrates a wide range of paid for complementary services linked to the SFC agenda. Whilst the organisation itself is not a member of SFC it has been included here as it may offer some useful insights to those looking to increase their earned income.

5.3.1 Stockport: Foodsync

When core funding for the food partnership was coming to an end in Stockport they looked to bring in an element of trading income to drive towards a more sustainable business model. Whilst delivering on the sustainable food agenda was their core business, they recognised that they were also delivering a range of services above and beyond this that could be paid for. These included: business planning, feasibility studies and food and drink strategies for a range of organisations. Although food system projects and partners were meeting regularly, there was a gap in technical knowledge and support to really make things happen. This was a gap which could be filled by a new organisation: [Foodsync](#).

Foodsync describes itself as a 'food strategy specialist, focusing on sustainability, commercial prosperity and social value'. It works in partnership and delivers projects for the corporate sector, SME businesses, local authorities, housing associations, community and voluntary sector. Work to date has included: operational plans, rebranding, menu development, staff selection for community cafes; business planning e.g. for a disused market hall; feasibility studies on possible food growing projects; reviewing food provision in care homes; organising a trade show and food enterprise programme for Stockport Council; developing food strategies for food service operators, hospitality and leisure providers, and social enterprises such as meals on wheels and luncheon clubs. Foodsync offers detailed technical support and strategic management. Their main clients are public or large third sector organisations. They pay Foodsync to work with other sectors that they are not so confident at working with. Foodsync's current turnover is approx. £100k with only 5% of this coming from grants.

At Foodsync about 30% of their time is given freely on partnerships, supporting organisations out of the area or supporting businesses beyond their normal scope.

Lessons learnt

- Be really clear about which activities are going to generate revenue for you. Where will your income come from?
- Managing the VAT threshold can be quite a burden. Some clients can have an issue with you being VAT registered, because of the way they allocate their budgets.
- There can be challenges when setting up a food business from within a food partnership as it is likely that there are other people in the partnership who will already be operating businesses in a similar space. There quickly becomes contested territory with businesses competing for the same funding.
- Commissioners may not be interested in the fact that you are a social enterprise. The reputation of the social enterprise sector is not altogether professional and this can hold you back.
- If you provide businesses with advice which makes them operate better, someone somewhere needs to pay for that. If there is money flowing around that wasn't there before you should be able to unlock it.

5.3.2 Social enterprise model: Good Food in Greenwich

Greenwich Cooperative Development Agency (GCDA) started 35 years ago. It is a Community Benefit Society and as such it has charitable status with HM Revenue and Customs; can issue shares; receive donations; and benefits from greatly reduced tax (no tax on profits) and business rates (approx. 80% reduction). The organisation has 32 staff and 10 freelance tutors and hosts the local food partnerships [Good Food in Greenwich](#), and [Good Food Lewisham](#). GCDA turnover is approx. £1.2 million.

Transition towards enterprise

GCDA activity was fully grant funded for twenty six years from 1982 until 2008. In 2008, changes in government funding and grant regimes along with changes to pension law meant that they faced a significant budget deficit. Being in deficit meant they couldn't get loans, overdrafts or grants; they were forced to trade. Having had substantial grant funding over many years they had accumulated significant assets and now focused on how they could turn these into income generating

opportunities. They applied all their skills and knowledge to the question of how to make money. They looked at consultancy, renting rooms, training and hiring out their facilities. They also had to evolve as an organisation; staff had to learn new skills and some had to completely change what they did. But this has meant that many staff have grown and developed. Their public relations staff member is now running a market! At this point they did anything and everything necessary to survive.

Commercial training kitchen 2008

The [Training Kitchen](#) was set up in 2008 and the GCDA offices moved to an industrial estate to be located above it. The Kitchen provides much needed start-up and trading space for food businesses. Creating the kitchen raised GCDA's profile and meant that they could give practical and theoretical support to businesses. It also allowed them to pursue their own food-related trading activities such as food production and training at very low risk. The Kitchen enables GCDA to generate unrestricted funding and has been instrumental to them winning several large public sector contracts.

The first of these in October 2015 was a public health contract to run cookery clubs and promote a healthy food environment. This included work on the food partnership, healthy catering commitments, food growing, food access, food poverty, growing and events. GCDA included the running of the food partnership as part of their tender submission so the delivery of Good Food in Greenwich actually became part of their contract. This was followed in May 2016 by a contract with public health in Lewisham which again included supporting the Lewisham food partnership. Also in May 2016 they succeeded in winning the contract to run Bracton training café, located in a medium secure hospital which is funded through an occupational therapy centre.

A further contract is with Royal Borough of Greenwich Council Economic Development and focuses on enterprise development. In this instance they were one of 30 other providers, all playing a part in delivering a much larger framework of activity. GCDA's role focuses on delivering adult learning; both a generic business course and a food skills course. They have also bid in to deliver on 'Family learning', offering courses on 'introducing solids', 'fun with foods' etc. In all of this they have used the skills gained during their grant funded period to bring in income.

They cite their depth of knowledge on how the food system operates and their understanding of the link between enterprise, skills, community engagement, asset management and public health as a key factor in them winning these contracts.

Greenwich Kitchen (community centre)

After the success of their training kitchen their next step was to take over a failing community centre that had a production kitchen on site. They have used food to help quadruple the use of the building. The centre is now the base for a food distribution hub, Fareshare, cookery clubs, free food business training, lunch clubs and older peoples clubs. They started by assessing the needs of the community and then brought in partners to help deliver a really diverse programme of activities. Based on their success with this community centre, the local authority is now investing money in another building for them to manage. This is a type of community led regeneration using food as a medium for jobs and community.

Newham 2018

Their strong reputation means that they are now getting approached by developers who want to partner with them. They see GCDA as the right partner to have on board to establish strong community links. As leaseholders of a new venue in Newham in 2018 they will again aim to curate a centre that has food as its anchor. In essence they will set up a food business that demonstrates all aspects of the Sustainable Food Cities agenda. So as well as talking to others about how to set up and run sustainable food businesses they are also doing it themselves... so it works. When they take on the new building they will ask themselves 'how can we maximise the reasons people will use this space?' The answer might include retail, training or a café for example. In this way food is at the heart of how they engage people. One aspect they will be looking at is food business training. They will ask local people 'What are you making at home?' and 'How can we help you?' They always start by really trying to understand the needs of the local community.

Funding mix

In the period November 2015 to March 2016 GCDA had a turnover of £1.5 million. Grants accounted for just 2% of this. 48% of the funds came from public sector contracts (5 contracts in total); and 50% from trading income. From March 2016 - March 2017 the organisation grew and also increased its grant funding to 10%.

Grants are seen as a form of investment and they enable the organisation to take risks. At the very outset they are asking 'How will this piece of work become financially sustainable?' They got a grant from Sustainable Food Cities for the Coordinator for Lewisham food partnership. Already they are asking 'What other tasks will the coordinator need to do in order to make it financially viable?'

Lessons learnt

- Think about financial sustainability early on
- Spend time finding the right organisations to partner with
- Understanding the needs of the local community is essential
- Be an entrepreneur and be prepared to take risks
- Think as widely as possible
- Always assess a project thoroughly before starting.

5.3.3 Asking individuals: London Food Link

London Food Link (LFL) brings in small amounts of earned income through a variety of mechanisms.

Donations

LFL asks for donations on all publications. They are available to download for free, but people are requested to make a donation.

Membership subscriptions

Followers and beneficiaries of LFL are invited to become supporters by making a contributions between £25 and £150 per year depending on the nature of the organisation / individual. This forms a contribution towards the running costs of the network. All supporters receive a full colour, high quality magazine delivered to their door, so this contribution also helps cover that cost.

The Real Bread Campaign (hosted by Sustain) also has its own paying supporters. The income received from these fees cover the cost of the Coordinator to promote Real Bread, individual supporters and provide services. Currently it makes a small contribution to staff overheads as well, but is not able to fully cover these costs.

Training courses

LFL runs ad-hoc training sessions, but there is a more significant Urban Food Growing Training programme run by sister network – Capital Growth. This is partly grant funded and partly funded by charging individuals to attend.

Fee paying events

LFL run a series of [events](#) including networking evenings, talks and workshops e.g. ‘Tonics and Teas’ where people learnt how to make ferments. In this instance an LFL supporter donated the use of the venue for free. They charged £30 per ticket and made a profit of approx. £400.

Selling merchandise

LFL sells maps, tea towels and bags through its [online shop](#). They have also held silent auctions at events.

Lessons learnt

- If you are going to charge for membership then you have to deliver membership services which cost money to deliver! The focus of our networks is that people paying are supporting our work rather than expecting a high level of service provision.
- Staff time in running events and recruiting attendees needs to be factored in and can be significant.
- Lots of small venues are happy to donate use of a venue if you are able to provide them good promotion as a ‘thank-you’.

5.4 Food hubs

Some SFC food partnerships have sought to establish multi-functional food hubs alongside their partnerships. These include [Cambridge](#), Durham, [Greenwich](#) and [Food Nation](#) in Newcastle. These have partly been created as a sustainable way of delivering on a variety of food partnership objectives but have the added potential bonus of generating income that can be channelled back into the partnership in the longer term. Whilst no SFC member has yet achieved the goal of funds being reinvested back into the partnership, there has been significant interest from around the Network in these models.

5.4.1 Food Durham: Durham Food Hub

Durham Food Hub links local producers with businesses wanting to buy local food (hotels, restaurants, cafés etc.) enabling a single point of ordering for businesses and an easier route to market for producers. The hub does not have a physical base, but is instead run in partnership with a reputable local wholesale distributor, who will take care of logistics, collection and delivery. A Food Hub Manager (with extensive food industry experience) is employed on a 3 day a week contract by Durham Community Action (DCA) and is responsible for the overall management and development of the project. He works with suppliers and buyers to build up new business and provide support

with marketing, brand development and quality criteria. Support for local producers focuses on product development, packaging development, commercial assessment, sales development, government support and compliance.

The Food Hub is set up as a separate trading business; Food Durham Trading Ltd. It is a limited company with share capital which is wholly owned by Durham Community Action. Esmée Fairbairn Trust funded the feasibility study (2015) and then 3 years of funding for implementation of the hub. The grant funding will taper off year on year so its first challenge will be to try and sustain the running costs of the operation itself. The aim is for it to become financially sustainable by year 4. Anything that is made beyond this will be Gift Aided back to DCA. It is hoped that this mechanism will secure the core funding of Food Durham in the future.

5.5 Public sector funding

Many SFC members access some of their funding from the public sector (note: a third of members are housed within the public sector). This is usually through the local authority public health department or in some cases the NHS (Scotland). This funding has often provided the 50% match funding for SFC grant funded coordinator posts.

Coordinator Grant applications (Round 1 and 2)	
Applications fully match funded by public sector	8
Applications partially match funded by public sector	8
Applications with no public sector match funding	8
Total	24

Of those that were partially match funded by the public sector, additional match funding came from local trusts, individuals; feed in tariffs and businesses. Although this is just a snapshot of the funding picture, it gives an indication of the importance of public sector funding for SFC members. As the public sector moves from grants to contracts and from commissioning towards more collaborative place-based approaches such as Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) it will be important for SFC members and the movement as a whole to ensure it is well positioned to engage.

5.5.1 Food Cardiff

In Cardiff, the SFC Coordinator, originally match funded by Esmée Fairbairn and the hosting organisations Cardiff Council and Cardiff and Vale Public Health team in Phase 1 of Sustainable Food Cities continues to be supported by the local organisations. It has also been successful in securing a Phase 2 sustainable SFC grant. One of the barriers to being within the public sector is the limited capacity for fund-raising. To overcome this they have set up a Charitable Fund 'Food Sense Wales' which is housed within Cardiff and Vale Health Charity (a separate legal entity that houses 300 funds). This will in effect act as a mechanism to enable them to bid for money that would be difficult to access otherwise.

6. Funding for food policy councils – the story from the US

Each year the John Hopkins Center for a Livable Future's [Food Policy Networks Project](#) conducts a survey of Food Policy Councils (FPCs) across the US. In the 2016 survey, among US councils that answered questions related to their budgets (n = 192), the majority (64%) of FPCs reported an annual budget of no more than \$10,000 ([Sussman & Bassarab 2017](#)). 23 FPCs in the United States reported a budget of between \$25,000 and \$100,000 and 24 had a budget over \$100,000 (ibid). Their funding comes from a mixture of state or local government grants and private foundations along with individual donations and gifts in-kind.

6.1 Private foundations

There are more private foundations in the US (compared to charitable trusts in the UK) and they tend to fund activity that would be public sector funded in the UK ([Santo 2016](#)). Over recent years, foundations have recognised that FPCs are an effective way of making good food happen and are increasingly funding the FPC movement. Ten years ago there were only a handful of FPCs in the US and now there are 263 (Sussman & Bassarab 2017).

Foundations have been instrumental in supporting the food systems work of many of these councils. A key focal point for foundations over the past decade has been on funding work around obesity prevention. Healthcare foundations have been particularly interested in funding projects that promote access to healthy food, a priority policy area for a number of food councils; several have even invested in efforts to instigate and build the capacity of food policy councils. For example, the Kansas Health Foundation has funded over 20 new Kansas Food Policy Councils ([New Food Economy Dec 2017](#)). [Livewell Colorado](#), a non-profit organization which receives funding from Colorado Health Foundation, has been supportive of the development of FPCs in Colorado. Meanwhile, [Community Food Strategies](#), funded by the health foundation Blue Cross Blue Shield North Carolina, provides capacity building support to FPCs in North Carolina. It also receives funding from W.K. Kellogg Foundation to provide micro grants to FPCs in the state. Similarly, the [Michigan Local Food Council Network](#) awards small grants (again funded by W.K. Kellogg Foundation) to FPCs in the state. Other foundations, like the John Merck Fund and the Henry P. Kendall Foundation, have also found value in supporting social movements and network development to foster healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems.

6.2 Government funding

About one-fifth of US councils receive government funding of some kind. In some cases, Food Policy Council activity begins at a grassroots level with funding from private foundations before later transitioning to more secure funding from local or state government, as happened in Baltimore ([Santo, Yong, & Palmer 2014](#)). For other councils, such as the New Mexico Food & Agriculture Council, local or state government allocations were instrumental to the initial operations and success of the council before the council transitioned to local foundation support ([CLF 2015](#)). Others may receive government funding for specific projects; the Madison Food Policy Council, for example, receives [\\$300 000 from their local government](#) to support healthy food retail projects. This Council also recently received \$10,000 from the City to support operation of the Council. Some

FPCs have also accessed federal grants, but the application process is cumbersome and, for many, not worth the effort.

6.3 Other funds and in-kind support

Many FPCs (63% of North American Councils) also rely heavily on in-kind support from government and non-profit organizations, which includes staff time, office space and substantial volunteer input.

Few FPCs have sought to be income generating bodies themselves. Of the 192 U.S. respondents to funding questions, only 35 raised funds from membership or individual donations (Sussman & Bassarab 2017). There is a small amount of support from the corporate sector but this tends to be in-kind or project-specific, such as supermarket donations of unsold food to food banks or organizations working to tackle food waste.

The Food Policy Networks Project has begun to work on efforts to strategically influence funders and donors to create a supportive funding environment. They do not give out grants themselves, but in similarity with Sustainable Food Cities, they develop resources, host webinars, run workshops and advocate for FPCs.

7. Sources of further information

7.1 Strategic planning and financial management

- [Full Cost Recovery overview](#) – useful summary provided by Big Lottery Fund
- [Directory of Social Change](#) – fundraising training programme
- [National Council for Voluntary Organisations](#) – NCVO membership is free for organisations with a gross annual income lower than £30,000 and will give you access to a wide range of tools and resources that support strategic planning and fundraising.
- [NCVO Income Spectrum Tool](#) - provides a framework for reviewing your current income and funding mix. Available to all.
- [Knowhownonprofit](#) - overview of a range of strategic issues including income and funding.
- Sustainable Sun Needs Analysis Tool - a sustainable funding health check for your organisation. Only available to Funding Central subscribers (see below).

7.2 Grant making trusts

- [Funding Central](#) provides low-cost access to thousands of the latest funding and finance opportunities from European, national, regional and local government as well as from charitable sources. Subscription to the service is free for organisations with an annual income under £100,000.
- www.trustfunding.org.uk – listing over 4500 grant making trusts. Offers one week memberships for £99 + VAT.

7.3 Private sector funding

- www.companygiving.org.uk – full details on company giving methods and what they are likely to fund. Can search for companies sympathetic to your cause. Subscriptions cost £582 per annum.

7.4 Public sector contracts and funding

- Sign up to alerts with individual Local Authorities
- Register with [Procontract](#)
- Use the governments [Contracts Finder Service](#) – to search for public sector contracts
- www.governmentfunding.org.uk - brings together all the national, regional and local government funding schemes in one place. Subscriptions cost £582 per annum.

7.5 Social enterprise approach

- [School for Social Entrepreneurs](#) – training courses
- [Startup Britain](#) – campaign by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs. Includes local support organisations.
- [UnLtd](#) – provides grants to aspiring entrepreneurs
- [Inspire2enterprise](#) – free to access support service for those starting or growing an enterprise.
- [Setting up a social enterprise](#) – government guidance on setting up a social enterprise including legal forms.
- [The Hive](#) – business support initiative set up by Co-operatives UK and The Cooperative Bank.

7.6 Current opportunities

- For regular updates in your local area sign up to your e-news bulletin from your local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS).
- Sign up to fundraising enews from [Third Sector](#)
- Weekly updates from [Kings fund](#) (health)
- SFC bulletin

7.7 Online tools / crowdfunding

- [Localgiving.com](#) - an online tool for local charities and community groups to raise money, awareness and support (fees apply)
- [Justgiving.com](#) - an online fundraising tool (fees apply)
- [Justtextgiving](#) - The mobile phone provider Vodafone and the donation website JustGiving have launched a new service that they say will enable all UK registered charities to raise money through text donations for free
- [Everyclick.com](#) - an online fundraising tool (fees apply)
- [My Donate](#) - a free fundraising service run by BT where every penny goes to charity.

7.8 Food policy councils

- [Funding Food Policy Councils: Stories from the Field](#) (2015). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future.
- Lathbury Girard, M., Ha-Ngoc, T., Leo Pollock, L. (2015). [Funding Food Policy Councils: Lessons from the Field](#) [webinar]. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future.
- Sussman, L. & Bassarab, K. (2017). [Food Policy Council Report 2016](#). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future.
- [Workshop on Funding: Sustaining Your Council](#) (2014). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future.