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Mapping of Funding Advisers Networks in England and Implications for a Funding Advice National Network

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Sheffield
Hallam University
CENTRE FOR VOLUNTARY SECTOR RESEARCH

The Finance Hub is delivering to the
Government's ChangeUp
programme to create voluntary and
community organisations which are
effective and independent because
they are financially sustainable.

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Contents

Acknowledgements

This report arises from the project *Research and Mapping of Funding Advisers Networks* (project FH11) commissioned by the Finance Hub (one of the six national hubs of expertise for infrastructure support to the voluntary and community sector under the Government's ChangeUp programme) in November 2006.

Following a tendering exercise, the Finance Hub commissioned a team from the **Centre for Voluntary Sector Research** (led by Dr Gareth Morgan) at **Sheffield Hallam University** (SHU) to undertake the study. The team from SHU comprised five staff in all:

- Dr Gareth Morgan – project co-ordinator
- Dr Steve Webster – lead researcher
- Jason Leman – survey design and analysis
- Teresa Tinklin – literature review, workshop arrangements, case studies

In addition, Dr Rob Macmillan provided critical reflection and advice based on earlier studies.

The research team has received a great deal of help and advice from an Advisory Panel comprising:

- Kevin Curley – National Association for Voluntary and Community Action
- Richard Hindley – South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau
- Chris Hollins – Fit4funding (the Charities Information Bureau, Wakefield)
- Pauline Reeve – Ryedale Voluntary Action
- John Skrine – Funding South West, creating:excellence
- Amanda Sheppard – Institute of Fundraising
- Linda Whitfield – Funding Information North East

However, the contents of this report, including any opinions expressed, are entirely the responsibility of the authors – not the Advisory Panel.

This study was only possible because of the commitment of **several hundred individuals who took part in the research**. These were drawn from **a very wide range of organisations (both voluntary and statutory) who either offer funding advice or who are interested in the role of such funding advice networks**. A list of participating organisations is provided in Appendix H. The research team wishes to acknowledge the substantial contribution of all these participants.

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List of Abbreviations

BME	Black and minority ethnic (groups)
CVS	Council for Voluntary Service (the term includes a number of such bodies using different names e.g. "Voluntary Action" plus a place name).
FAN	Funding Advisers Network (see definition in section 1.2) - often referred to as a Funding Advice Network
FANN	The proposed *Funding Advice National Network* which might proceed from this study
FAP	Funding Advice Provider (see definition in section 5.3)
FAW	Funding Advice Worker
FAWN	Funding Advice Workers Network
F4F	Fit for Funding (Charities Information Bureau).
FINE	Funding Information North East
FTE	Full time equivalent
IoF	Institute of Fundraising
LIOs	Local Infrastructure Organisations (a term to cover CVSs and other organisations which provide services seeking to develop the local voluntary and community sector).
NAVCA	National Association for Voluntary and Community Action
NCVO	National Council for Voluntary Organisations
RCC	Rural Community Council
SYFAB	South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
VCOs	Voluntary and Community Organisations

Executive Summary

About the study

This report arises from the project *Research and Mapping of Funding Advisers Networks* (project FH11) commissioned by the Finance Hub. The Hub had identified a need to undertake further research on Funding Advisers Networks, i.e. those networks concerned with supporting the work of those who provide funding advice to voluntary and community organisations.

The particular context for this work was the provision of funding advice to voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) in England – and the need to develop further the support provided to those who provide funding advice to VCOs.

This study has – within a relatively short timescale:

- Mapped out Funding Advisers Networks (FANs) across England at local, sub-regional, regional and national levels.
- Collated detailed information on the operation of FANs. This includes: details of how to contact networks, a profile of those involved, how these networks are funded, the links between FANs, and feedback on the issues they are faced with.
- Developed a database of FANs, which has been delivered to the Finance Hub in conjunction with this report.
- Examined the scope for the establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN). In particular, it has sought and received feedback on this from a substantial number of funding advice providers – and has identified possible models for the operation of such a national network.

Funding Advisers Networks

The research found a substantial level of activity around the country with respect to Funding Advisers Networks (FANs). For the purposes of this study these networks concern those involved in the provision of funding advice to voluntary and community organisations (VCOs). Many funding advisers are actively involved in FANs – and indeed there was a very high level of interest and participation in this research project from those personally involved in the provision of funding advice to VCOs.

FANs provide valuable support to many funding advisers. These networks provide, for example, important opportunities for networking with others and the sharing of good practice. Such support is important in a context where many funding advisers work in relative isolation with modest resources. Indeed, the majority of funding advisers who took part in the research provide funding advice on a part-time basis.

The study identified 42 FANs around the country:

- FANs exist at local, sub-regional, regional and national levels.
- There is plenty of variation in the way that FANs are organised. Some FANs are well established, others are quite new.
- Membership arrangements for FANs vary, e.g. some are restricted to VCOs, others are open to advisers based within both the VCS and the statutory sector.
- There are also substantial variations in the provision of FANs across the nine English regions.

Overall, FANs undertake their work with fairly modest resources. Indeed over half of the co-ordinators of the FANs that responded reported that their network had no funds or income of its own.

The work of the different FANs is illustrated by four case studies. These show some of the different ways in which FANs work and highlight the importance of these networks in providing support to funding advisers.

While there is plenty of evidence of good practice from existing FANs, these networks also face a variety of challenges in both sustaining and developing their work. Key issues reported by existing FANs in this respect include: constraints on staff time, travelling distance/time and cost, lack of funding, and reliance on informal support. Networks can be fragile and a number are no longer in existence. It is clear that more needs to be done to both support existing FANs and to promote and support the development of new networks.

The research shows that while there are already existing or emerging links between many of the networks, there is scope to develop these further. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of FAN co-ordinators were interested in improving links with other FANs. The lack of a directory of existing FANs has been an obstacle to this in the past.

A Funding Advice National Network (FANN)

The research found a lot of support for the establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN), with 73% of survey respondents in favour (in all 239 people answered survey questions on the FANN). However such support was not unanimous - 6% of survey respondents disagreed, while 21% did not express a clear view. The process of development of a national network would need to take account of the concerns and reservations of those not convinced of the need for a FANN.

Two consultative workshops were held in London and Sheffield and all participants who expressed a view were happy with the name *Funding Advice National Network*. It was seen as fundamental that it should operate as a network, linking individuals and organisations involved in providing funding advice.

There was a clear consensus that a FANN needs to address all three of the following broad functions:

- Sharing / networking / mutual support for funding advisers.
- Provision of specialist training and standards.
- Advocacy and development of funding advice work.

However, in the initial stages of its development (i.e. in the first 12 months), it would be important for the FANN to focus on establishing the network as a membership organisation. In particular, it would be vital to fully involve its members in the shaping of its early work programme. Such involvement of members would help to promote participation and to facilitate a sense of 'ownership' of the network by its members. Further, on some topics there are likely to be differing views about the work that a FANN should undertake.

Overall, 57% of survey respondents stated they would be interested in participating in a FANN and 25% stated they would be willing to devote time to support the development of a FANN. FAN co-ordinators were more likely than others to indicate an interest in participating in a FANN.

Sustainability is very important to almost all those in the study. There is virtually no support for the idea of a short term initiative to help develop a FANN without the backing of long term resources.

However, the evidence obtained suggested there is little scope for Funding Advice Providers to adequately fund a FANN through subscriptions and fees. Whilst most are happy with the idea of subscriptions and fees providing *part* of the income for the FANN, the potential income from such sources appears to be modest – and certainly not sufficient to cover a FANN with full time staff. It is clear that a FANN could not become a reality without significant grant funding. Further, any grant funding would need to support the work of the FANN in the medium term, i.e. for a minimum of three years.

Sustainability was seen as more important than scale – respondents preferred to start with something smaller that was sustainable, rather than attempt to establish a larger body that was not sustainable.

Only 3% said their organisations would be willing to pay an annual subscription to fund a FANN, although a further 65% said this was a possibility. Chief officers were less in favour of their organisation paying an annual subscription than were funding advisers. Of those who thought their organisation might pay an annual subscription, 38% stated they might pay up to £25 annually, a further 41% stated they might pay up to £50 annually, and 19% might pay up to £100. Very few respondents might pay over £100 in annual subscription.

When asked about other sources of funding, nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents thought the FANN should be funded through charging for services such as courses, materials, training and events. This was the most popular option for other funding across all types of respondent. However, local authorities, the Big Lottery Fund, ChangeUp and central government were all seen as possible sources of funding for a FANN.

Half of all survey respondents thought the FANN should be based within an existing organisation. Nearly a quarter thought it should be set up as an independent body.

Three possible models for a FANN were identified by the research:

- Model A – a new organisation with charitable aims.
- Model B – a project within an existing VCS infrastructure organisation.
- Model C – a formally constituted association with charitable objects that contracts with a host organisation to provide all FANN services.

Amongst other suggestions, four voluntary bodies with a national role were identified as possible hosts for a FANN: Fit4funding, NAVCA, NCVO, Institute of Fundraising. All said they would or might be interested in hosting the FANN. Some were already doing substantial work which might be seen as part of the work of a FANN.

Recommendations

The report makes a number of specific recommendations in respect of strengthening and developing Funding Advisers Networks (FANs):

- As part of the early work programme for a FANN (see below), many participants would like to see publication of a directory of FANs, building on the database of networks which this project has delivered to the Finance Hub.
- A key role for the early work programme for a FANN would be to take steps to facilitate and support the further development of FANs, including developing the links between networks.
- It would be vital to involve FANs, particularly network co-ordinators, in the development and planning of any programme of work by the FANN concerned with supporting the work of FANs.

It is recommended that the Finance Hub takes steps to establish a Funding Advice National Network (FANN). The report discusses the options for how this may be undertaken. It is important that existing FANs are involved in the process of establishing a FANN at the earliest possible stage.

Further, it is proposed that a FANN should have a membership structure of funding advice providers, i.e. those individuals and organisations providing funding advice to frontline VCOs. Members should have a clear voice in its affairs for it to be successful.

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview and objectives

This report arises from the project *Research and Mapping of Funding Advisers Networks* (project FH11) commissioned by the Finance Hub in November 2006.

The Finance Hub (one of the six national hubs of expertise for infrastructure support to the voluntary and community sector under the Government's ChangeUp programme) has a number of strategic objectives for its work. This project relates to its strategic objective to: 'Support advisers in their work with frontline voluntary and community organisations'.

In commissioning the project the Finance Hub identified a need to undertake further research on Funding Advisers Networks, i.e. those networks concerned with supporting the work of those who provide funding advice to voluntary and community organisations (VCOs). As the Hub said at the outset of the project: 'There are many Funding Advisers Networks in England, little up to date knowledge exists about where they are, what they do, and who is involved.'

The remit for the project was, therefore, to carry out research on networks of funding advisers in England, with two overall objectives:

- mapping existing Funding Advisers' Networks (FANs);
- seeking feedback on the potential establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN).

The particular context for this work was the provision of funding advice to voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) in England – and the need to develop further the support provided to those who provide funding advice to VCOs.

The specific objectives set out for the project were:

1. To map out Funding Advisers Networks (FANs) across England at local, sub-regional, regional and national levels.
2. To find out who is involved in these networks and how to contact them via the networks.
3. To establish how these networks are funded and what issues they are faced with.
4. To establish whether there are links at the national, regional, sub-regional and local levels to promote the sharing of resources and learning.
5. To examine the scope for the establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN) which would provide a sustainable method of networking funding advisers, achieving consistent standards of provision and addressing geographical gaps in supply across England. (The Finance Hub drew parallels between this and CANN – the Community Accountancy National Network).

In the next two sub-sections we first set out definitions of 'Funding Advisers' and 'Funding Advice Networks', and then go on to review relevant literature in this field.

1.2   Funding Advisers Networks - Definitions

At the outset of the research, the project team developed definitions of 'Funding Advisers' and 'Funding Advisers Networks'. These definitions were devised in the context of the specific remit of this project.

1.2.1   Funding Advisers

In the context of this research 'Funding Advisers' or 'Funding Advice Workers' refers to those **individuals who provide funding advice to 'frontline' voluntary and community organisations**. The provision of funding advice may be the main element of the work, or it may be just one aspect of their work. Their posts may be full-time or part-time and their job title may or may not refer to funding or funding advice. For example, many funding advisors are employed as development workers by local voluntary infrastructure organisations (LIOs).

Funding advisers may be based within the following organisations:

- VCS infrastructure bodies, including:
  - local infrastructure organisations (LIOs), e.g. CVS, Volunteer Bureau
  - sub regional and regional organisations, e.g. sub-regional and regional voluntary sector networks, Rural Community Councils (RCC)
  - national infrastructure organisations
- Specialist VCOs providing funding advice and/or information, e.g. Fit4funding (Charities Information Bureau), South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau (SYFAB), Funding Information North East (FINE)
- National voluntary organisations which are parent bodies of federations of local branch charities operating in particular fields and which host specialist posts which provide advice to those within their own organisation
- Local authorities
- Other funding bodies
- Individual consultants, with no organisational base

Funding advisers may provide either a generic service (wide range of funding sources), or a more specialist service (advice on specific funding sources, e.g. European Funding).

1.2.2   Funding Advisers Networks

Most of the funding advisers networks are easily identified by their names, as they tend to include the words: Funding Advisers Network, or Funding Advice Workers' Network (FAWN).

What is meant by a funding advisers 'network'? For the purposes of this research, such **a network is defined by communication between groups of funding advisers from different organisations (including individual consultants) which is structured in some way**. For example, this communication may involve any or all of the following: an email list, face-to-face meetings, or newsletters.

For the purposes of this study, a group of people from within the same organisation (e.g. a CVS, or SYFAB) would not, generally speaking, constitute a network. An exception to this might be provided, for example, by a (large) national voluntary

organisation which employed a number of funding advisers at different 'branches' around the country.

The geographical areas covered by funding advisers networks encompass:

- local
- sub-regional
- regional
- national (e.g. the FAWN email network hosted by NAVCA)

1.2.3 Different categories of organisation

The following provides an emerging model for the different categories (or levels) of organisation with respect to funding advice workers:

- Funding Advisers – individuals providing funding advice (see above for examples of where they may be based). These may also include specialist funding advisers within national voluntary organisations.

- Funding Advice Projects – specialist projects with a number of funding advisers working within the one organisation.

- Funding Advice Networks – local, sub-regional and regional.

- Funding Advice Networks – national (e.g. the NAVCA FAWN email group; the proposed Funding Advice National Network).

N.B. Some organisations may fit into more than one category.

1.3   Literature Review

A review of existing literature relating to funding advisers networks was carried out in order to draw together existing knowledge on networking for funding advisers and more broadly, issues facing funding advisers at the present time.

There is relatively little existing research that is directly relevant to the aims of this project. However, a small number of relevant reports were identified and reviewed.

Perhaps the most relevant research was carried out by Linda Whitfield (2005)[1] at Funding Information North East (FINE) on behalf of NACVS (now NAVCA): *"Findings of the support and development needs of local funding advice workers research".* She distributed a questionnaire to funding advisers based in local infrastructure organisations (CVSs etc.), seeking their views on their support and development needs, including their views on Funding Advice Workers Networks (FAWNs)[2] and a potential national network. The questionnaire was distributed via various NACVS networks: FAWN, the Development Workers network, the Information Services Group network and the Chief Officers group. A total of 45 responses were received. In addition two questions were placed on FAWNnet to seek wider discussion of the future direction of Funding Advice.

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[1] Full references are given at the end of Chapter 1.
[2] A FAWN is a funding advisers network.

The research findings from Whitfield's study suggested some lack of awareness among funding advisers of existing regional and sub-regional FAWNs, with only just over half stating that there was a sub-regional / regional FAWN in their area. The quality and benefit of these networks ranged widely. Those networks that had a dedicated worker to act as an organiser / facilitator were generally seen as most effective, while those that relied on a revolving series of volunteer facilitators generally suffered from a lack of continuity. Generally, the funding advisers in Whitfield's study thought that resources were better targeted at local FAWNs rather than at a national FAWN. Regional or sub-regional FAWNs were seen as more likely to provide one-to-one support and a greater understanding of the local context. Meetings would also be easier to access, requiring less travel time and expense particularly for part-time workers on tight budgets. Where a region covered a wide and varying geographical area (e.g. urban and rural) it was more difficult to make regional network meetings relevant to all attendees. Less than half the respondents thought that the creation of a virtual network on the National Hub website (i.e. discussion forums) would improve national support for funding advisers. This was because it could be time-consuming accessing and following discussions on such forums because of the sheer volume of information posted and topics covered were often too wide-ranging and diverse to be relevant.

When asked what kind of support national and regional / sub-regional FAWNs should provide, respondents to Whitfield's study indicated that the best role for a national FAWN would be to:

- Provide national funding intelligence and regional information bulletins.
- Develop a nationally accredited funding advice qualification.
- Develop quality standards for funding advice.
- Lobby national funders and represent the views of funding advisers.

The role of regional / sub-regional FAWNs was best seen as:

- Providing opportunities for networking, sharing information, and peer and mentoring support.
- Building relationships with regionally-based funders.
- Providing (nationally developed) training and locally relevant workshops.
- Disseminating information on regional and sub-regional funds.

Another relevant study was carried out by Murphy *et al* (2004) for creating:excellence South West ("*Funding Advice Services in the South West*"). This study aimed to map funding advisers and their networks across the region, map the types of funding advice services available and create a regional database of funding advisers. The research was based on 126 telephone interviews with funding advisers, based in VCOs (49), local authorities (64) and 'other' organisations (13) (e.g. co-operative development agencies, regeneration partnerships etc). Only 13 of the advisers were providing funding advice on a full-time basis. The research identified two different modes of funding advice: information-giving only and 'hand-holding'. They found that funding advisers based in VCOs were much more likely to provide 'hand-holding' support (71% compared with 44% in local authorities and 54% in other organisations). Funding advisers were involved in a number of different networks at national, regional and local levels. While these were not all funding advice networks, respondents felt that they helped them with their funding advice role. The advisers made a plea for less rather than more information, and for information to come from

fewer sources to avoid duplication and overlaps. They were positive about the need for a funding advisers network, believing it would provide:

- information on what others are doing and what is happening
- mutual support from other advisers
- a forum whereby funding advisers could raise issues with funders
- a means of overcoming isolation for some.

General issues affecting funding advisers included:

- Lack of capacity because of increasing demand and budget cuts (local authorities cutting support grants to CVSs and / or reducing their own funding advice services).
- Need to simplify funders' processes, reduce bureaucracy, and for funders to collaborate with each other on funding application forms.
- Feeling that funding advice is undervalued and not well understood – there is no standard way of measuring effectiveness.

The report recommended:

- More resources
- Easy methods of evaluating work
- Networks to share information / pool funding information
- A review and expansion of training for advisers
- Methods to filter hand-holding versus information-only requests
- A call to funders to simplify their paperwork and to collaborate with each other.

In a study entitled "*Networking Funding Advisers*" Berry *et al* (2006) investigated the possibilities that online discussion forums present for funding advisers and investigated gaps in information resources available to advisers. They ran a small-scale pilot of an online forum involving 29 advisers and consulted 95 advisers and 14 VCOs across England via individual interviews. Their research established the need and desire among funding advisers to share expertise and knowledge. Rather than finding gaps in information resources available to funding advisers, they found that advisers do not need more information – in fact they are experiencing information overload, duplication and the difficulties of a fast-changing funding environment. Knowledge areas covered by advisers are already very broad and are expanding even further (e.g. business planning, social enterprise, governance and legal issues). What funding advisers need is better ways to share, access and interpret information. Funding advisers expressed irritation at bulk e-mailings and mailing lists and the desire to opt into information feeds. They expressed concern as to how funding advisers networks could be self-sustaining, with or without technology support. With particular regard to online discussion forums, significant findings were that:

- There is a wide range of confidence and experience in using online services among funding advisers and a range of attitudes from scepticism to enthusiasm.
- The funding advisers who trialed the pilot forum saw the potential it offered for pooling expertise. Funding advisers and the networks that support them, where these exist, are not averse to using online discussion forums.
- The online forum needs to be relevant and useful in their daily work for funding advisers to use it.

- A 'question and answer' approach (such as the Experts Online model) is well understood and a valuable source of specialist advice. Experts Online was seen as particularly valuable for advisers who wore different 'hats'.
- As a virtual medium, online discussion forums offer some solutions to the problems of horizontal and vertical networking. However, face-to-face networking is still highly valued and is an important element required to underpin and reinforce online relationships.
- Regional online forums, and thematic forums (e.g. rural community development, community recycling, market town support etc) would help to provide focus.

Stephenson (2006) reviewed training provision for funding advisers via a questionnaire survey of advisers ("*Supporting advisers in their work with front-line VCOs – training and development opportunities for advisers*"). They received responses from 156 funding advisers across England. The research highlighted that funding advisers highly value attending training and meeting other advisers and that training courses provide vital opportunities for networking.

Hollins et al (2006) (*"A model to meet the funding advice needs of front-line organisations in England"*) reviewed the provision of funding advice, concluding that coverage was strong and evenly dispersed in some areas, while in other areas some districts were better served than others. They acknowledge the vital role that funding advice work plays in the voluntary and community sector and the predominant role of CVSs and RCCs in providing that service. They highlight the need for a co-ordinated and structured approach to funding advice at national and local level – recognising the need for partnership and the lead role the sector has developed in the provision of funding advice. They also state the need for 'industry-wide' approaches to quality standards, training and information provision for funding advisers. They propose a two-tier model of provision with county- and district- level co-operation in order to maximise use of resources. They propose that a structured service could offer:

- at county level – training, network co-ordination, quality frameworks, major conferences;
- at district level – one to one support, information and linking to county-level services for front-line organisations.

It is difficult to fully assess the value of funding advice work. However one recent evaluation[3] of the impact of the South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau (SYFAB), *"South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau Impact Assessment"*, Webster & Tinklin, (2005), provides an example of the impact funding advice work can have on the VCS. SYFAB provides an interconnected package of services that can be tailored to users' needs, including access to development workers, training courses and an information service. The study found that 1173 different groups/organisations used SYFAB's services during the period 2003-05. The impact assessment involved a survey of service users during this period. Overall, groups responding to the survey reported that a total sum of £4.03 million had been raised and this is by no means a comprehensive figure. (Fifty percent of those using the service were sent a questionnaire and 34% of these responded.) Of course other factors will have influenced whether groups received funding or not, however, 84% of groups made it clear that SYFAB's services had made a difference to them and 65% of groups

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[3] Funded by the Coalfields Regeneration Trust.

regarded its services as either 'essential' or 'very helpful' in assisting them to make funding applications.

Another study by creating:excellence and Funding South West (2006) – *"Funding Advice for the Voluntary and Community Sectors: What difference does it make?"* – summarises the learning from five case studies exploring practice in the provision of funding advice to the VCS in the region. The research demonstrates clearly that investment in funding advice which is linked to organisational development and capacity building can unlock significant income for the VCS, helping the sector grow and be recognised. In areas where there is not significant funding advice and limited capacity building, VCS development is much more limited and the level of inward investment levered into these areas is lower. An approach which combines capacity building and organisational development with funding advice, available locally, appears most productive for small to medium sized organisations, while partnerships and larger organisations require a more sophisticated approach. Generic development workers need access to specialist support in order to offer such an integrated level of support.

Overall the literature review showed that networks were seen as a valuable means of supporting funding advisers, that offered the potential for networking and the sharing of information and expertise. While online forums offered some scope for effective networking, face-to-face meetings were highly valued by funding advisers.

1.4   Methodology

In order to tackle the project, in a relatively short-timescale, a three-phase research project was carried out employing a variety of research methods. The following is a summary of the methods which were used, including the two surveys which provided the core of the research:

- Review of literature
- Initial desk research
- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Survey of **Funding Advice Providers**
- Survey of co-ordinators of **Funding Advisers Networks**
- Case studies of four Networks
- Consultative workshops – Funding Advice National Network (FANN)
- Additional feedback from key stakeholders – regarding the hosting of a FANN

A substantial number of people participated in the research. In particular, a total of 239 people took part in the two surveys (of Funding Advice Providers, and of Funding Advisers Networks). Participants in the research included funding advisers, local VCS infrastructure organisations, other VCOs, local authorities, and others concerned with funding advice provision.

Further, an Advisory Group was set up for the project, which comprised the following people:

- Kevin Curley – National Association for Voluntary and Community Action
- Richard Hindley – South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau
- Chris Hollins – Fit4funding (the Charities Information Bureau, Wakefield)
- Pauline Reeve – Ryedale Voluntary Action

- John Skrine – Funding South West, Creating:excellence
- Amanda Sheppard – Institute of Fundraising
- Linda Whitfield – Funding Information North East

The Advisory Group provided invaluable support, which included advice on the framing of the research in the early stages, information about existing networks, comments on draft questionnaires, and assistance with publicising the survey of funding advice providers and the consultative workshops.

A more detailed description of the research methodology is provided in Appendix G. In particular, it summarises the work carried out in each of the three phases of the project.

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2. Funding Advisers Networks - Findings

This chapter discusses the results of the survey of co-ordinators of Funding Advisers Networks. The questionnaire which was used for this survey is shown in Appendix A. A summary of the key findings appears in section 2.12.

Note: The Table numbers in this chapter refer to the tables in Appendix B which provide more detailed survey statistics. For example table B.1 refers to a more detailed table presented in Appendix B.

2.1 Mapping the FANs

The research identified 42 Funding Advisers Networks (FANs) across England. These were identified through desk research, conversations with key stakeholders, and through the surveys of funding advice providers and of FAN co-ordinators. Of these 42, 29 replied to our survey during the short timescale of the study. At least three of the responding Funding Advisers Networks were new or at an embryonic stage. The FANs were located across the country with some areas having significantly more networks than others.

Figure 2.1   Region of FANs

Region	Responded	Identified
National	1	2
North East	1	1
North West	5	5
Yorkshire & Humber	4	6
West Midlands	2	2
East Midlands	2	5
East	3	6
London	2	3
South East	2	3
South West	7	9
Total	29	42

The results in this chapter are based on the responses from 31 co-ordinators of Funding Advisers Networks about 29 Funding Advice Networks. A list of these 29 networks is provided in Appendix D.

Seventeen of the networks had one co-ordinator, six had joint co-ordinators, and 5 had rotating co-ordination (Table B.1). Over a third (38%) of the networks were local, another 38% were sub-regional, and just over a fifth (21%) were regional. There was one response from a national FAN (NAVCA FAWN) (Table B.2).

2.2 Aims of the FANs

Not surprisingly a chief aim of all of the networks was to facilitate networking for funding advisers. Most (90%) also aimed to facilitate the sharing of good practice; and about two-thirds aimed to co-ordinate and develop resources (such as information and training), provide a voice for funding advice work and foster

partnerships with key bodies. Just over one-third (38%) acted as a champion for funding advice work. (Respondents could tick more than one aim, Table B.3).

Other aims of the FANs included professional development for funding advisers, sharing information, promoting communication and acting as a "conduit" between networks and funders.

2.3 Membership of the FANs

The majority of FANs (about 80%) responding to the survey allow membership from funding advisers based within VCOs and local authorities. Nearly half of the FANs allowed membership of organisations such as local authorities and VCOs. Several of the FANs were open to any funding adviser that provided advice free of charge, with private sector consultants either excluded or allowed on an invitation-only basis. Just 14% of the FANs allowed individual consultants, and just 7% other funding bodies (Table B.4).

Some FANs were quite specific, for example, members were from local CVS organisations. Some were open to wider memberships than just funding advisers, for example, all advisers working with VCS groups, or organisations such as councils and CVSs. One FAN also had a membership scheme for other workers in the sector who did not work as advisers but wished to have links with funding advisers.

The majority (62%) of the FANs had less than 25 members. A further 17% had between 26 and 50 members and just 10%, three FANs, had over 100 members (Funding East, NAVCA FAWN, and London's Second Tier Advisers Network, which is open to funding advisers and other advisers) (Table B.5).

The size of FANs very much depended upon their role, for example:

> *We needed a VCS body that we have deliberately kept small in order to meet our members' needs.*

> *Membership is drawn from sub-regional FANs (each is expected to send a member).*

Three of the groups were in the early stages of building the networks with launch events and other membership promotion planned.

There was some indication that larger networks carried out a wider range of roles, such as fostering partnerships with key bodies and developing resources.

2.4 Activities and services provided by FANs

Most (83%) of the FANs held regular meetings, these were generally held every two to four months, although some were more frequent and one just annually (Table B.6)

Over two-thirds of the FANs used email lists, though this was less common for very small FANs (i.e. those with under ten members). Several FANs also had web sites, or pages on other sites, for example, CVS sites.

Nearly half (48%) of the FANs provided events and workshops. These often focused on funders, as well as providing training. Examples given included:

- Bi-monthly meetings with speakers (usually a major funder) and different topics (e.g. cash flow, project planning, marketing)
- Half & full day continuing professional development workshops covering funding advice issues.
- Occasionally organised briefings on funding opportunities e.g. new big lottery fund schemes, etc.

Another 48% of FANs provided other information resources such as fact sheets, email bulletins, newsletters, information packs, details on specialist advisers, databases of funders, funding news etc.

Over a quarter (28%) of the FANs provided training resources.

Other activities and resources provided included social events, mentoring for new advisers, and links with other VCS networks.

Several networks commented on the possibilities for future development of resources, including training documents. Some of the larger organisations provided a high level of resources and training that were then being used by smaller FANs.

2.5   Current links between FANs and stakeholders

Well over half (59%) of the FANs shared information, resources, and activities with other FANs (Table B.7). One comment described a gradual process of building partnerships:

> *Recent links with a neighbouring FAN been developed. Had one joint meeting to share information and knowledge. There are now plans to share resources and activities in the future as the partnership develops.*

Many links exist from smaller FANs up through sub-regional bodies, for example, by sending through minutes of meetings and having representation within the larger FANs. These larger bodies frequently share information within the region, often on a formal basis.

Just under a quarter (24%) had other more informal links with other FANs (Table B.8). One comment stated these links were worthwhile: "we have had a very informal link, but very useful". However, another respondent indicated such ad hoc contacts could also be a result of there being insufficient resources available to develop stronger links.

Over half (55%) of the FANs reported they had links with other adviser networks. As many Funding Advice Providers are part-time, many have diverse roles and are members of other networks. This meant advisers could also be part of strategic bodies, or social enterprise networks, and so on – providing informal links to other networks (Table B.9).

Networks could also involve others across the sector through working with other networks. For example, in one instance this was facilitated by a FAN and funders forum being supported by the same strategic body.

Stakeholders were included in FANs in different ways. One comment referred to the inclusion of stakeholders in the network as affiliated members, these members supported advice work in their capacity as, for example, funders or members of second tier organisations. Another comment outlined a more formal process involving stakeholders outside of funding advice work:

> *We have a steering committee involving key stakeholders which includes a local university, district councils, CVS and local government representatives for an even spread of views as to how the network is progressing/assisting the members.*

2.6 Improving links with other FANs

Nearly all (97%) FAN co-ordinators stated they would be interested, to some extent, in improving links with other FANs (Table B.13). The nature of improving links depended a great deal on the current links the FAN had. For example, some FANs, especially the local networks, were interested in improving regional links. Whereas some sub-regional and regional FANs were more interested in linking between regions and offering events that drew advisers from across the country to share a wide range of knowledge and experience. Some thought that links between networks could help to develop opportunities such as joint training, and improve lobbying.

Other FANs, however, thought the focus should be more on local networking. As one comment stated "We're quite focused on our local agenda by necessity".

The issue of improving links between FANs leads also onto the question of a national network – this is addressed in Chapter 4.

2.7 Funding of FANs

Just over half (52%) the FANs had no funding or income. A quarter received external or other funding and just over a fifth (21%) were funded by a separate organisation as part of its work (Table B.12). Just 14% of FANs (i.e. four networks) had an annual budget and only one had a set income (Tables B.10 and B.11).

The rotating co-ordination of some FANs meant the burden of costs could be spread, for example the organisers "taking it in turns to pay for meeting rooms and refreshments". Where the co-ordinator was funded, this could be from a variety of funding streams, for example:

> *The funding advice network coordinator is funded by CapacityBuilders, DEFRA Rural, Social and Community Programme and LloydsTSB Foundation's Collaborative Fund.*

However, the reliance on funding meant that co-ordinators' posts could be lost. Some comments referred to the loss of funding meaning at least some work of the FAN would be reduced, for example the delivery of funding information and advice.

Some comments referred to the need for sustainability, provided through charging for services and having low costs:

> *[Our] position on external funding or income is that it should keep running costs to an absolute minimum as a means of making the network sustainable.*

> *The meetings are hosted by members at no cost to the network. The administration is done by the secretary (me), at no cost to the network.*

The ambition of several FANs was to extend their work, however, and the lack of funding prevented this.

Several, if not most, FANs rely on volunteers to enable them to function. With the cessation of several funding streams there is a clear need for sustainability. There is also a need for either long-term funding streams, or models where FANs can be sustained by self-generated income.

2.8   Good practice – what works well

People were asked about what aspects of their network's work had worked well and why. Most were clear that their role as a network for the sharing of information, particularly information about funds and funding issues, had been successful. The mechanism for this information sharing ranged from dissemination of news via email lists, to supporting networking between funding advisers, to having speakers from funding bodies at conferences.

One respondent highlighted the sharing of information with other VCS networks, through representatives attending respective meetings.

Several FANs thought a web presence was a useful way of sharing resources:

> *[Our] funding information portal was borne out of discussions at meetings and has also been a piece of good practice receiving commitment from all members.*

Most FANs also thought encouraging networking had worked well, to share experiences and as a mutual support mechanism. Networking has also encouraged joint working between funding advisers.

Several FANs were able to provide training and found this worked well. One FAN established a 'funding training programme' for VCOs, delivered in regional districts as a programme of courses, so that workers in the sector could access fundraising training. Another FAN focused on enabling all advisers/areas to receive training on a specific issue/topic area. Whether provided by the FAN, or by an external body, training was thought to be good practice for a FAN.

Some FANs actively focused on the dissemination of best practice and quality, for example:

> *We have set up a working group within the network to look at models of best practice and to implement them for everyone. We have designed monitoring*

and evaluation forms for funding advisers so they can monitor and evaluate their services (one to one advice, funding surgeries, funding fairs etc).

For others the sharing of best practice arose naturally out of a range of events with conferences, meetings, and training helping to spread good practice.

Apart from the sharing of knowledge FANs could also effectively carry out other roles, for example, having a co-ordination role across a region or county so that local FANs did not duplicate events or clash dates.

There were also comments on the need to develop a voice for funding advisers, especially with funders. One respondent advocated a close working relationship which promoted respectful engagement and joint working on funding priorities.

Overall, the sharing of knowledge is the main focus of the FANs and the main area of best practice quoted. The methods used to share this knowledge are usually related to the resources available to the FAN and the geographical area covered. This topic is discussed in the next section.

2.9 Barriers

FAN co-ordinators were asked about any factors that had hindered their network from being more effective. The main barrier to FANs becoming more effective was time available for those involved. Several comments referred to the need for co-ordinators to have more time but this was difficult. One comment referred to the competing pressures on resources:

The development of the FAN requires resourcing in terms of staff time. This is very expensive when funding advice services are being cut.

One comment referred to a lack of co-ordination and communication being a barrier, however, "we overcame this by appointing a permanent chair and secretary." This highlights the need for members with sufficient time to invest in the FAN.

Several comments referred to time pressures for members of the FAN. In many cases attending events involved travelling considerable distances, this being a particular issue in rural regions. The development of resources or networking opportunities could also require significant investment of time. Often, other commitments would take priority over the development and maintenance of the network.

This barrier to involvement also meant that key people were not becoming involved in the networks in the first place, as one respondent stated:

Many comments to a meeting request include that this is not in any way a core part of their job - so it is difficult to get time to be involved. We need to show them the benefits of being involved.

The need for time translated into requirements for funding for posts, as, without a funded co-ordinator, or with a small number of funding advisers, network members could not progress the work of the FAN. In at least one case this has led to the FAN being discontinued.

Whilst funding advisers are interested in FANs the lack of available time has restricted involvement. The lack of funding for co-ordination has also led to the development of FANs being hindered by competition with front-line priorities, however this is in an environment where funding for funding advice work is generally scarce.

2.10 Development

Co-ordinators were also asked about any improvements they would like to see in their network's activities/services, and what would help their network to achieve these.

Funding was the main requirement for further development of the networks, respondents had a range of development aims to be funded including:
- Meetings and events;
- Development of training and resources;
- Information collection and dissemination;
- Development worker to support, identify and meet needs, and to promote value of funding advice;
- Increase membership through outreach work, engaging with advisers who would otherwise not know about the network;
- Time and space in which to operate.

One comment referred to the need for adequate long term funding so that the FAN could develop to meet the needs of funding advisers. One comment suggested a regional FAN co-ordinator could hold a budget that both facilitated a regional FAN and acted as a funding stream for sub-regional and local FANs.

Other co-ordinators would like to see increased participation from FAN members, probably relating to the time pressures discussed in section 2.9.

Several comments referred to working with other networks, for example, to review the models adopted by other networks in order to structure the FAN better, or to develop joint events. One respondent stated there should be more central direction of the role of FANs and how they operate.

Training was a large part of development for some FANs. One comment referred to a need for "training and support from the Hub on all areas of funding advice to save individual projects having to invent their own", although with flexibility for FANs to develop their own training. Other ideas on training included running "higher level learning sessions for experienced advisers to help them to become experts" and developing "courses on 'how to be an adviser'".

One respondent thought there should be "A mapping of who does what among the membership to identify any gaps etc in provision."

Some of the larger FANs also thought that they could develop the extent to which they work with, and lobby, funders:

> *Gathering the opinions and ideas of advisers and feeding them into grant-making policy, having more discussions with funders and policy makers etc.*

> *Group's role could be expanded to take on more of 'championing/voice' dimension in relation to sub-regional funding issues.*

Most FANs thought, however, that the extent to which they could further develop, was largely dependent on funding. The improvement of links between FANs and sharing of models and resources was one way in which the FANs could improve over time without additional funding. Sub-regional and regional FANs also looked to expand their lobbying role.

2.11   FANs – feedback from the consultative workshops

The two consultative workshops in Sheffield and London provided further feedback regarding FANs. In particular, during the workshops there was some discussion of the issues faced by both existing and new FANs. As one would expect, the issues raised echoed much of the feedback received from the survey of FAN co-ordinators. Here is a summary of key points raised:

(a) Participants felt that in general FANs are valuable as part of VCS infrastructure – and that they ultimately lead to better funding advice for front line VCOs.   Key strengths of FANs include:

- Sharing of good practice and expertise.
- Developing links between funding advisers and facilitating mutual support, which was particularly beneficial for new workers or those who were geographically isolated.
- Helping to build relationships through network meetings.
- Improving / developing relationships with funders and helping funders to develop their understanding of the needs of VCOs.
- Enhancing co-operative working e.g. between rural and urban-focused workers.
- Tackling barriers.

(b) It is important to support and encourage the further development of FANS. For example:

- It is important to publicise FANs and promote the involvement of funding advisers.
- One view is that FANs need to be proactive in seeking wide involvement of those providing funding advice to VCOs.
- A clear remit for FANs is important.
- Many VCS networks exist which are not solely about funding advice but which do involve funding advisers e.g. those involving fieldworkers or development workers.

(c) Workshop participants identified a wide range of challenges facing both existing and new FANs, including:

- Limited resources, including staff time and money to attend meetings and organise network activities.
- Staff turnover which can affect continuity of network contacts and continuity of FAN co-ordination.
- The reliance of some FANs on informal support – e.g. often run on the good will of participants (and of their managers / organisations).

- The limits on existing funding advice services, e.g. dedicated (full-time) funding advisers are in the minority. Also there is a need to promote/validate the role of funding advisers.
- The rapidly changing funding environment and the complexity of funding programmes, e.g. European funding – there is a need for sharing of skills and partnership working.
- The need to improve links with funders and demonstrate how FANs can help them.

(d) New or emerging FANs particularly face a wide range of challenges. However, there is an opportunity for new networks to learn from the experiences of existing FANs (provided that the contact details of networks can be appropriately publicised).

(N.B. Section 4.5 outlines other feedback from the consultative workshops. In particular it summarises the feedback on how a potential Funding Advice National Network (FANN) could address the issues faced by FANs.)

2.12   Funding Advisers Networks - Summary

The following provides a summary of key points from the research on Funding Advisers Networks (FANs).

- 42 FANs were identified across England. FANs were identified in each of the 9 regions. Detailed information was gathered on 29 networks via a survey of co-ordinators.

- 58% of networks had a single co-ordinator, the rest had joint or rotating co-ordination.

- About 80% of FANs allowed membership from both VCO-based and LA-based funding advisers.

- 62% of FANs had less than 25 members. 17% had between 26 and 50 members. 7% had between 51 and 100. Only three networks had over 100 members (Funding East, NAVCA FAWN and London's Second Tier Advisers Network which is open to funding advisers and other advisers). Three of the networks were in the early stages of development.

- 83% of the FANs held regular meetings, usually every two-four months. 69% used an email list, 45% had a website. 48% hosted events or workshops and provided information resources. 28% provided training resources and 17% had a newsletter.

- Well over half (59%) shared information, resources and activities with other FANs. Many links exist from smaller FANs up through sub-regional bodies. These larger bodies frequently share information within the region, often on a formal basis. Nearly all (97%) stated they would be interested in improving links with other FANs. Local networks were particularly interested in improving regional links; sub-regional and regional FANs were more interested in national links.

- Just over half of FANs (52%) had no funding or income, a quarter received external or other funding, just over a fifth (21%) were funded by an organisation

as part of its work. The rotating co-ordination of some FANs meant the burden of costs could be spread.

- All networks facilitated networking for funding advisers. Most (90%) also facilitated the sharing of good practice; about two-thirds co-ordinated and developed resources, provided a voice for funding advice work and/or fostered partnerships with key bodies. Just over one-third (38%) acted as a champion for funding advice work.

- FANs were seen as a valuable part of VCS infrastructure that ultimately lead to better funding advice for front line VCOs. Key strengths of FANs include: sharing of good practice and expertise, developing links between funding advisers, facilitating mutual support for funding advisers, improving/developing relationships with funders and helping funders to develop their understanding of the needs of VCOs.

- A key challenge to the effective working of FANs was staff time available – for members and co-ordinators. Travel time and costs were also issues particularly where FANs covered large geographical areas. Lack of funding and reliance on informal support from hosting organisations and members was a further challenge. There was a call for sustainable funding for FANs to support their current work and future development.

3.   Case Studies of Existing Funding Advisers Networks

This chapter provides four examples of existing Funding Advisers Networks (FANs). They illustrate some of the different models of the ways in which FANs operate and highlight different approaches to supporting the work of funding advisers. While these particular case studies provide examples of FANs which operate at either regional or sub-regional levels, there are other FANs which operate at local or national levels. The four case studies are:

- York and North Yorkshire Funding Advice Network – a sub-regional network based at a sub-regional VCS infrastructure organisation.
- Leicestershire Funding Advice Network – a recently established sub-regional FAN which is led by the county council.
- Funding Advice Workers Network North East – a regional network covering the North East, based at Funding Information North East.
- George – the South West Advisors' Forum – a regional network, whose members are county-level funding advisers networks.

3.1   York and North Yorkshire Funding Advice Network[4]

York and North Yorkshire FAN is a sub-regional network based at North Yorkshire Forum for Voluntary Organisations – a sub-regional VCS infrastructure organisation. It has a single co-ordinator whose work is funded by external grants (CapacityBuilders, DEFRA Rural, Social and Community Programme and Lloyds TSB's Foundation Collaborative Fund). The network is open to VCO and local authority-based funding advisers, however it's current membership is mainly funding advisers based within 14 local infrastructure organisations (e.g. CVSs). The network currently has 34 members. They have developed terms of reference for the group which serve as a guide for anyone wishing to join.

The work of the network primarily focuses on networking, sharing good practice, fostering partnerships and co-ordinating and sharing resources. Any issues with funders are referred to the regional FAWN (Yorkshire and Humber FAWN) for them to act upon as their views are perceived to carry more weight by funders. The network would like to have more direct influence over funders, particularly since they have first hand knowledge if VCOs are having difficulties with a particular funding stream. However, this is not the case at the moment.

The network uses a Yahoo membership website to store shared documents e.g. events calendar, best practice documents (e.g. evaluation forms), funding information sheets, and funding newsletters. The site also enables members to email each other easily. It has the advantage that it is free and would therefore continue should the co-ordinator lose her funding.

They hold bi-monthly meetings that last two and a half hours – allowing one and a half hours for business and an hour for a speaker. Having a different speaker each time is a good way to encourage people to come along. The sub-region is very rural and meetings are held in York as this is the most convenient place to get to,

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[4] For more information on the York and North Yorkshire FAN please contact Ellen Reeves, telephone 01347 825710 or email ellen.reeves@nyfvo.org.uk, or visit http://www.nyfvo.org.uk/fundingadvice.shtml

however, this still means that some members are travelling up to 50 miles and this costs them time and money. The meetings are well-attended, with 20+ members each time. Feedback from members on the meetings was very positive when the co-ordinator did a recent evaluation. They used to have a round robin agenda item asking members for news, however this took too long and they now try to circulate short reports before each meeting.

The network has established a Funding Training Programme for VCOs enabling them to access fundraising training for the first time. This has been delivered in each district as a programme of six courses.

They have designed monitoring and evaluation forms for funding advisers to use to evaluate their own services. They have also set up a working group within the network to look at models of best practice and to explore ways of implementing them for all members.

The network co-ordinates events sub-regionally, such as funding fairs and workshops that members organise within their own organisations. This avoids clashes and fosters working in partnership.

The original network members did an Open College Network (OCN) qualification for funding advice workers before they started the network. This lasted four days and proved a good way for them to develop relationships and get to know each other. This helped the initial development of the network considerably. Also having a sole co-ordinator is beneficial, ensuring that the network keeps happening. It also helps that the co-ordinator has a sub-regional overview of funding advice services in the area.

3.2   Leicestershire Funding Advice Network[5]

Leicestershire FAN is a sub-regional FAN with a single co-ordinator, set up at the end of 2006. The FAN is led and chaired by Leicestershire County Council and came about following the set up and success of the Leicestershire Funding Toolkit, an online one stop shop for funding information and advice in Leicestershire (www.fundingtoolkit.org) supported by Leicestershire Together the local strategic partnership for the county.

Membership of the FAN is open to anyone with a job or interest in funding advice in Leicester, Leicestershire or Rutland. It has over 50 members, including funding advisers based within VCOs and local authorities. Member organisations include CVSs, local and District Councils, regional bodies, for example Engage East Midlands, and even a local newspaper. It has a steering committee which discusses the needs of the FAN including planning forthcoming meetings, providing useful contacts and sharing responsibility for arranging speakers. They aim to tie meetings in with other local events. The steering committee has representatives from District Councils, CVSs and local government.

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[5] For more information on Leicestershire FAN, please contact the co-ordinator Lucie Keeley, telephone 0116 265 7020, email lkeeley@leics.gov.uk

The FAN meets once a quarter with meetings including invited speakers who provide perspectives from other regions, best practice experiences or information on new funds or funding from outside the shire (e.g. national grants). In the meantime the FAN uses mainly email communication for members of the network to share local funding news and good practice. One issue that members have mentioned is lack of time and resource to attend meetings. However, they are trying to address this by tying in meetings with local funding fairs and focusing the meetings on specific funding themes in order to sustain interest.

The FAN pools resources from its members to enable the delivery of meetings and networking events.

3.3   Funding Advice Workers Network North East[6]

FAWN North East is a regional funding advice workers network based at Funding Information North East (FINE) – a regional VCS infrastructure organisation whose core functions are to provide funding information services to the sector, to support funding advisers and to develop and maintain links with funders. The FAWN covers the whole of the North East – Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, County Durham and Teesside. The network has a dedicated co-ordinator and provides a variety of activities and services including:

- An email list
- A funding information bulletin reporting on new and changing funding opportunities relevant to the region – available by subscription.
- A directory of North East Grant Making Trusts, available in paperback, CD and online database formats.
- A website
- Training, including a level 3 training course 'Giving Funding Advice' and Continuing Professional Development workshops
- Resources, including an induction pack for new advisers
- A mentoring support programme whereby experienced advisers provide mentoring and support to new advisers. (This programme is currently being used as the basis of a pilot national mentoring programme run by South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau for the National Finance Hub).
- Bi-monthly meetings that last all day and include a business element (e.g. networking, dissemination of funding information and sharing of good practice) and a speaker's element, to which they typically invite a funder. This fosters good relationships with funders, providing an opportunity both for funders to tell advisers about changes in their priorities or procedures and for advisers to discuss any issues with the funder.

The network has evolved over the past 11 years and currently has over 30 members, 15-20 of whom attend regularly. Members are all workers (either full time or part time) who have a responsibility for giving funding advice i.e. funding advisers, development workers and information officers. Membership is restricted to VCS-based workers at the moment. Member organisations include CVS, RCCs and

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[6] For more information on FAWN North East, please contact the co-ordinator Linda Whitfield, telephone 0191 477 1253, email manager@fine.org.uk or visit FINE's website at www.fine.org.uk

specialist infrastructure organisations such as BME and museums. The lack of time resource within infrastructure organisations occasionally affects some member's ability to participate in the network.

Factors that have helped to make the network work well have included:

- Having a single dedicated co-ordinator and being linked to an organisation whose services benefit the network. This ensures that members are fully up to date with new and changing funding opportunities and provides them with a single point of contact to raise issues and seek support.
- The network being owned by its members and developing according to their needs. For example a training needs analysis is carried out every year amongst members and the results inform the Continuing Professional Development workshops.
- FINE forming a sub group with FAWN members to develop the Quality Standards in Funding Advice Programme within the North East. This programme includes the accredited training, induction pack and mentoring programme.
- Covering the whole of the North East region as this allows for both diversity and the sharing of local knowledge and expertise.
- Having developed close working relationships with funders – this allows the network to lobby funders, for example to improve application practices and for funders to approach and consult with the network about VCS issues and priorities. Funders are also members of the aforementioned Quality Standards in Funding Advice Programme, which further develops and strengthens the link.

The network has no budget or income of its own. It is funded by FINE as part of its work. The main potential barrier to the network's further development is the on-going need to secure long-term funding for FINE. It is currently funded by regional charitable trusts, The Regional Development Agency and income from subscriptions or purchases of its services.

FAWN North East has recently developed links with Cumbria FAN. They have had a joint meeting to share information and knowledge and have plans to share resources and activities as the partnership develops.

3.4   George – the South West Funding Advisors Forum[7]

George is a network of funding advice networks covering the South West region. Its members are informal county-level funding advice networks. It links and supports these networks and has been key to the successful spread of FANs across the region over the past four years. As well as supporting and helping develop local networks, George aims to develop its authority as a regional voice of county networks, in particular, to influence funders to address gaps and duplication and to provide a conduit for funders to address the VCS. George cascades information to its members and helps spread good practice through a regular conference, networking and training events.

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[7] For more information on George or the South West FANs, please contact John Skrine, 01823 250805, john.skrine@creatingexcellence.org.uk, or visit www.creatingexcellence.org.uk/regeneration-renewal-article226-p1.html

George's members include: DEFAN (Devon) the first county network in the region which began meeting in 2002, CFAN (Cornwall), DOFAN (Dorset), SOMFAWN (Somerset), FANWOE (West of England), NSFAN (North Somerset) and GeFAN (Gloucestershire), and Wiltshire and Swindon which have separate networks for the statutory and voluntary sectors. Other members of George include SAVAGE (providing support to the VCS on European funding) and Charity Bank.

George aims for its work to be guided by its members and its current services/activities include:

- Bi-monthly meetings
- An email list
- A regular conference (approximately annual)
- Training on social enterprise
- Cascading of information

George has a co-ordinator and is based at creating:excellence – a regional body which supports the development of sustainable communities, aiming to build the skills and knowledge of people working for sustainable communities in the South West. George's co-ordinator also administers the South West Funders' Forum and Funding South West, the advisory group for creating:excellence which encouraged the development of both fora in order to create more coherent linkages in funding for the VCS. Creating:excellence is supported by the South West Regional Development Agency. George has no funding of its own - it is funded by creating:excellence as part of its work. The FANs have been supported by small grants from the Network Participation Fund run by The South West Foundation and creating:excellence to help with set up costs, participation and development.

While George has been instrumental to the establishment and spread of FANs across the region, its work and that of the county networks is still evolving and developing. Factors that have slowed the development of George have included lack of resources for people to participate (e.g. time, travel costs), the fact that geographically it is a very big region, and slower uptake and lower levels of activity in some parts of the region.

4. Strategic Support for Funding Advice: Attitudes to Establishing a Funding Advice National Network

This chapter provides a summary of the feedback received concerning the potential for establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN). A summary of the key findings on this issue appears in section 4.6.

Note: The Table numbers in this chapter refer to the tables in Appendix C which provide more detailed survey statistics.

4.1   Respondents to the survey

Questions on the FANN were included in both the Survey of Funding Advice Providers and the Survey of Funding Advice Network co-ordinators. (Please see Appendix A for copies of the questionnaires which were used for these surveys.)

In total, 239 respondents answered survey questions on the FANN, including 46 chief officers/chairs of organisations, 30 co-ordinators of Funding Advisers Networks and 163 funding advisers. Nearly half (49%) were based at local VCS infrastructure organisations, and nearly a quarter (24%) were based in local authorities. A further 11% were based in regional or sub-regional VCS organisations, the remainder (16%) being based within specialist VCS organisations, funders, or working as independent consultants. Responses were received from all nine English regions (Table C.1).

4.1.1   Provision of funding advice

Of the 239 respondents, 221 had completed the Funding Advice Providers survey, which asked more detailed questions about the type of funding advice they were providing and their membership of a FAN. (The remaining 18 were network co-ordinators who completed the Network co-ordinators survey only; some of the 221 funding advice providers were also network co-ordinators and completed both surveys. Their responses to a FANN are only recorded once in the following section.)

Most (94%) of the 221 who completed the Funding Advice Providers' survey were funding advisers themselves and about one-third of them were providing funding advice full-time (Table C.2). Advisers and organisations providing funding advice were mostly providing general funding advice with about one-fifth (22%) providing specialist advice. Those based in regional or sub-regional VCS organisations were most likely to be providing specialist advice (Table C.3) and organisations with full-time workers were more likely to be providing specialist advice than those without.

Where organisations gave specific advice this was across a range of areas. Some were related to a particular remit, for example "children and young people" or "community renewable energy". Several gave advice on social enterprise.

4.1.2   Involvement in a FAN

Over half (53%) of the 221 funding advice providers were currently involved with a FAN and a further ten percent had been involved with a FAN in the past. 37% had never been involved in a FAN. There is considerable variation in the involvement with FANs by region (see Figure 4.1). Of chief officers or chairs of VCS infrastructure

organisations, just over a quarter (28%) were currently involved in FANs, compared with 60% of other respondents (Table C.4).

Figure 4.1   Involvement in FAN by region
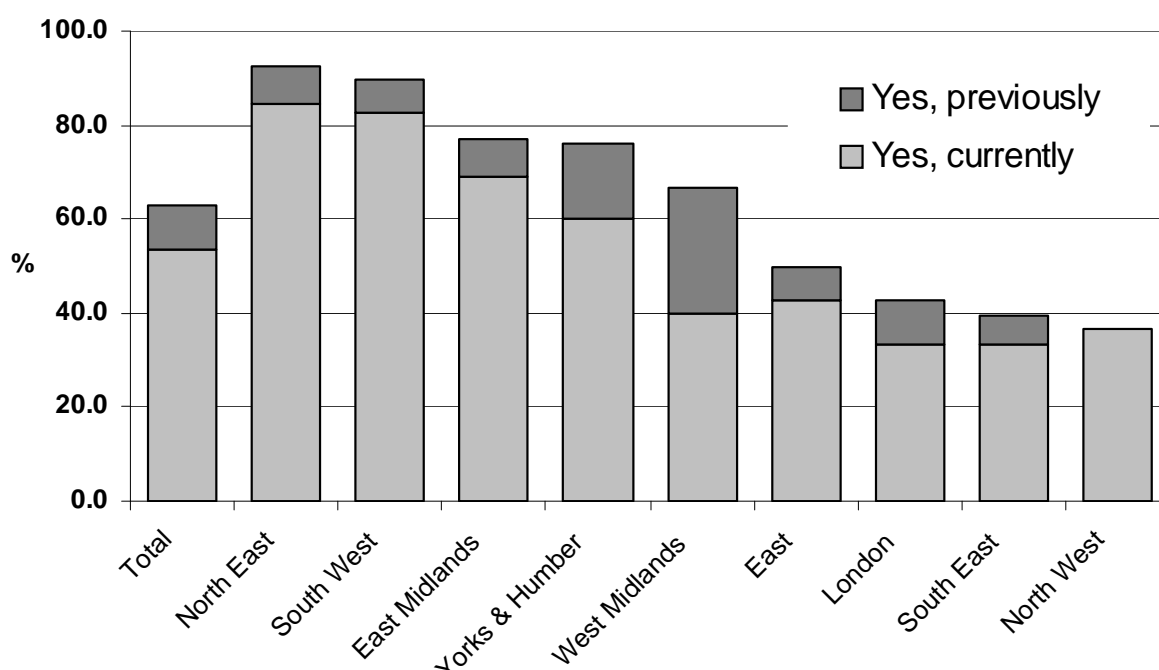
Analysing by organisations, two-thirds (67%) of respondents based in local authorities were currently involved in FANs, compared to 56% of respondents in local VCS organisations and 46% in regional and sub-regional organisations[8]. Just 39% of respondents based in other organisations, or working as individual consultants, were members of FANs (Table C.4).

4.2   A Funding Advice National Network (FANN)

4.2.1   The establishment of a FANN

Overall, nearly three quarters of respondents (73%) stated they would like to see the establishment of a funding advice national network (Table C.5). There was again considerable variation between regions, from the West Midlands where all respondents were in agreement with the establishment of a FANN to London where just 45% were in agreement. Most (82%) FAN co-ordinators agreed with the establishment of a FANN, compared with 62% of organisation chiefs or chairs, and just under three-quarters (74%) of other Funding Advice Workers. This perhaps reflected the perceived usefulness of a FANN to these different groups.

Funding advice workers based in local authorities were most positive about the idea of a FANN, 80% in agreement, whereas under two-thirds of respondents in regional

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[8] However, our access to local authority contacts was primarily through an existing network which may have affected the findings.

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or sub-regional VCS organisations were in agreement and 71% of those in local VCS organisations were in agreement.

Of those currently involved in a FAN, over three-quarters (78%) agreed with the establishment of a FANN, whilst only 59% of those who had been previously involved with a FAN agreed with the idea. This hints that previous unsuccessful engagement with a FAN was one reason for scepticism over the establishment of a FANN:

> *I think FANs are useful as long as they have clear aims and objectives and they have a purpose. I, like a lot of full time funding advisers, have heavy workloads and don't have the time just to attend 'talking shops'.*

Whilst many comments were positive about the general idea, several comments did question the need for a FANN. Some comments voiced the view that current organisations already provide the service:

> *It would be much better to encourage funding advisers to become part of the established and recognised professional body for fundraisers, the Institute Of Fundraising. There they could get support, take qualifications and join up to one of many specialist support groups.*

> *The issue of standards and qualifications is a workforce development hub issue. Equally, I would hope that the existing umbrella organisations nationally do the job of influencing, campaigning and representing on issues connected with funding and funding advice. I am not convinced the network model is the best way of addressing the issues and needs of funding advice workers or the organisations they advise.*

Others commented that a national network purely for funding advisers was too narrow a perspective, proposing a body that focused on a wider remit such as development workers as a whole.

There were also concerns over the sustainability of a FANN that required attendance at meetings:

> *The problem with any national network is the time spent, especially travelling. … I think [our regional FAWN] disappeared due to lack of time to organise it and people not willing to travel.*

4.2.2   The role of a FANN

When asked what the key roles for a FANN should be, the most popular role was facilitating the sharing of good practice (76%). This was closely followed by the co-ordination and development of resources (69%), providing a strategic overview of provision (68%) and providing a national voice (62%) (see Figure 4.2 for more details).

The top priorities for FAN co-ordinators were facilitating the sharing of good practice (80%), providing a national voice for funding advice work (80%) and facilitating national networking (77%). These were closely followed by co-ordinating and developing resources (73%), providing a strategic overview of provision (73%) and fostering partnerships with key national bodies (70%) (see Table C.6).

Figure 4.2   Key roles for a FANN
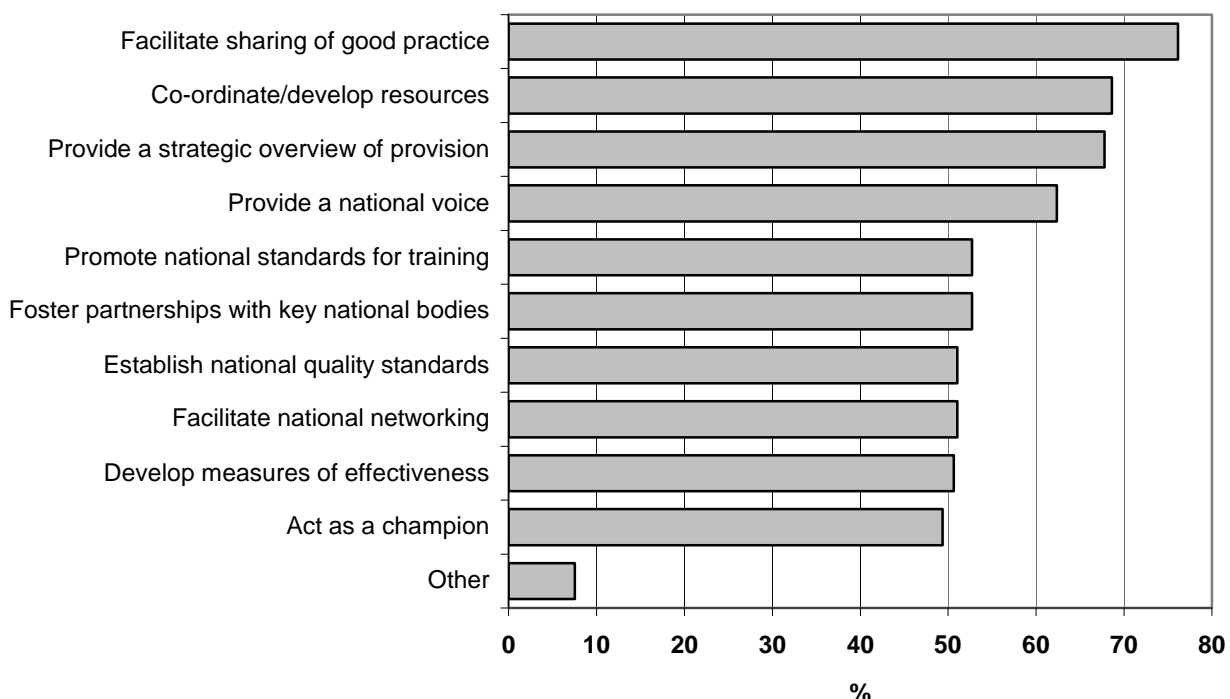
Some other key roles were also proposed for the FANN. Several respondents thought the FANN had a role as a voice for the VCS sector with major funders:

> *A national network would certainly provide a much stronger voice when trying to influence funding policy and practice of the major funders (notwithstanding the fact that my FAWN has already had no small success at this level).*

> *I do see a role for it in being a communication route between the voluntary sector and the various funders - a national body should have more clout than a regional one.*

But this was not a unanimous view, as one comment stated:

> *I believe that advocacy for funding should continue at a national level by existing organisations, but that the need for funding advice advocacy/ championing is an unnecessary layer.*

Other ideas included co-ordinating work so that funders worked together on funding a particular project in a joined-up manner, or for new cost-effective ways of distributing funding using funding advisers.

One comment stated there was a need to perform a mapping of funding advice provision:

> *Provide a real mapping of number of funder advisers, roles, type of funding advisers, part time/full time. A real audit of roles, needs, and expertise to establish a baseline.*

Some comments referred to the role of a FANN in the co-ordination and development of resources:

> *A FANN would help the professional development of funding advisers. It could provide easy access to packs, booklets we could use with our groups so we are not always re-inventing the wheel.*

> *Working together or a least being aware of what other FANs are doing will hopefully mean that work is not repeated and people can learn from each other over a wider spectrum.*

However, some respondents thought that much of the information and knowledge required by funding advisers is area-specific:

> *As the issues and needs affecting funding advice workers in the regions and sub-regions are very diverse they are best addressed at a local rather than a national level.*

> *Funding support and advice is most effective when co-ordinated at local level and then at regional level.*

> *[A FANN] would widen the pool of knowledge/ideas available in an email forum but could not provide the kind of tailored service necessary for effective functioning at a regional level.*

This has an influence on what roles are thought suitable for the FANN:

> *The local network to which I belong works because we share common issues. I see a national network as more strategic.*

> *The role of a FANN should be restricted to co-ordinating common issues from FANs that can only be addressed at the national level. I see this being mainly influencing funding agencies to improve their processes.*

Several respondents were concerned with issues around the relation between local FANs and the proposed FANN:

> *The FANN could be the voice of funding advisers and draw together strategic information, training etc but this needs to be fed down at a local level so that people feel involved.*

> *If we are looking at a national FANN it must keep its contacts at a local level. National organisations do have a feeling of being out of touch with those on the frontline.*

> *[Our] vision for a FANN is for a 'lean and mean linking mechanism' rather than an institution, and for something more co-operative than hierarchical. This is seen as more likely to achieve buy-in for advisers, and to be more cost-effective.*

There were some concerns over the FANN taking on a quality role:

Before the quality of funding advice is tackled, the work of funding advisers needs to be funded throughout the country.

There is concern from some at the grass-roots that a national body that concentrates heavily on quality standards may work against the interests of those struggling to provide any kind of service.

Support for the establishment and continuation of local and regional forums was also mentioned by several respondents. This included the development and sustainability of regional forums, and helping to set up local FANs.

Whilst facilitating the sharing of good practice was the most frequently chosen key role, there is great variety in the needs of funding advice workers and great variety in the potential forms a FANN could take.

4.2.3 Participation and support

Overall, 57% of respondents stated they would be interested in participating in a FANN and a quarter (25%) stated they would be willing to devote time to support the development of a FANN. However, due to the nature of a FANN being unclear many (32%) stated they did not yet know whether they would participate or give support (Tables C.7 and C.8). Co-ordinators of FANs were more likely than others to indicate an interest in participating in a FANN (67%) (see Figure 4.3). Those who were involved in a FAN or who had previously been involved in a FAN were more likely to be interested in participating than those who had not.

Figure 4.3   Interest in participating in a FANN, by previous involvement in a FAN and role
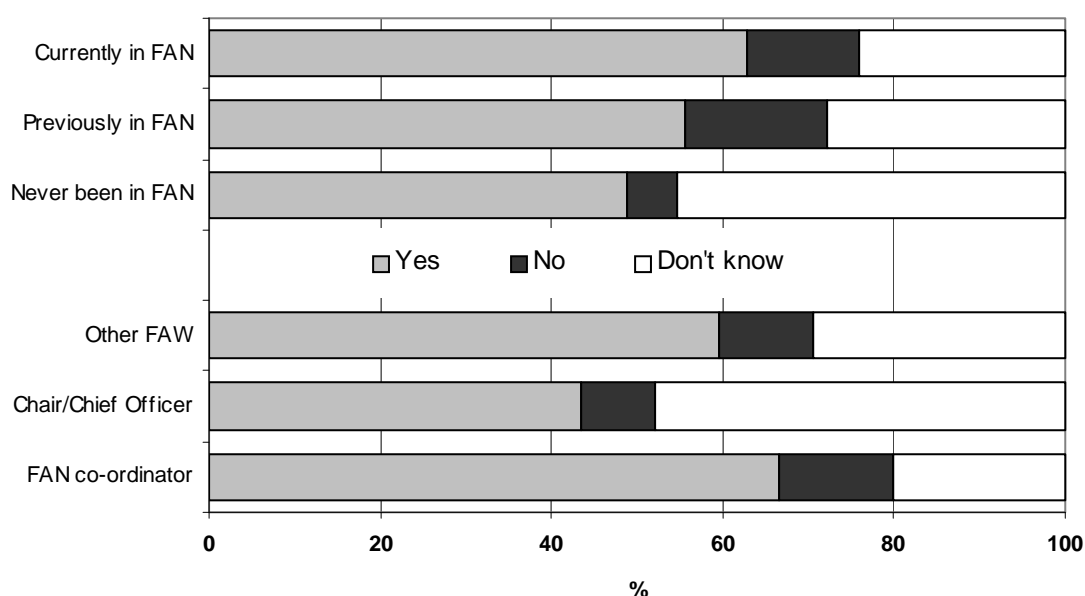
4.3   Funding a FANN

Several different methods for funding the FANN are explored below. Any model for the FANN would have to acknowledge the constraints of the funding infrastructure.

4.3.1 Paying an annual subscription

When asked whether their organisations would be willing to pay an annual subscription to a FANN, 65% said 'possibly' and only three percent said 'yes'. Comments indicated it was difficult to suggest how much organisations might pay when it wasn't clear what they would get in exchange (Table C.9).

Of those who thought they might pay a subscription, over a third stated they would pay up to £25 annually, a further 41% stated they would pay up to £50 annually and 19% would pay up to £100 (Table C.10). Very few respondents would pay over £100 in annual subscription. About 30% of those based in local authorities and regional/sub-regional VCS organisations would be willing to pay up to £100 compared with only 10% in local VCS organisations.

One respondent expressed concern that a subscription could act as a bar for some organisations with limited resources, requesting that organisations unable to pay the subscription should be enabled to participate.

Another comment referred to the difficulty of getting organisations to pay subscriptions when they are not primarily concerned with funding advice work:

> *As my organisation's main focus is not funding advice (I am the only person who provides it), I would personally be interested in the above and willing to fund a subscription out of my budget, however as a whole my organisation may not fund this, mainly dependent on the cost.*

4.3.2 Other sources of funding – charging for services

Nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents thought the FANN should be funded through charging for services such as courses, materials, training and so on (Table C.11). This was the most popular option across all types of respondent with respondents stating the FANN should develop income-generating activities, possibly on a social enterprise model. Some respondents, however, thought this would reduce participation:

> *Don't charge us, it's hard enough scrabbling around for money to pay for the core services we provide; we'd do without rather than have to pay as our local FAWN is extremely effective already.*

4.3.3 Other sources of funding – local authorities

45% of all respondents thought local authorities could provide funding, this ranged from 47% of respondents based in local VCS organisations to 40% of those based in local authorities themselves (Table C.11). However, some respondents thought local authority funding was too scarce with little, if any, funding available for funding advice work as a whole.

4.3.4 Other sources of funding – Big Lottery Fund

Over a third (37%) of respondents thought the Big Lottery Fund was a possible source of funding (Table C.11). However, one comment made clear that the fund is already pressured:

> *Leave the lottery fund alone, huge demands being made on it in exceptional times, i.e. re-allocation of funds to support Olympics, depleting their ability to deliver to much needed activity.*

One comment also referred to the problems some potential members would have with lottery funding as their religious beliefs would prevent them from engaging with a network funded by gambling.

4.3.5 Other sources of funding – CapacityBuilders and Central Government

Over a quarter (29%) of respondents thought the FANN should be funded as part of ChangeUp, and over a fifth (22%) thought it should be funded through central government (Table C.11). There were several comments on obtaining funding through central government, as one respondent stated:

> *A FANN is a must for the VCS and has previously been very unsupported - with the current developments within the third sector I think this should be funded through the home office.*

However, there was scepticism of the likelihood of such a method of funding:

> *Clearly, the best method of funding for a FANN would be mainstreaming. However, I don't expect to see that in my lifetime.*

4.3.6 Other funding possibilities

Other suggestions for funding the FANN were funders or charitable trusts. In support of this one respondent commented:

> *It is of benefit to funders to meet with funding advisers. Funding could come from them to support the development and network. It is a good value way for them to communicate funding programmes and changes.*

However, some respondents had concerns over the FANN being funded in this way, stating that there needed to be independence from funders and those with a vested interest in maintaining good relations with the funders.

It is notable that FAN co-ordinators did not favour any particular funding stream. A couple of respondents thought a solution would be to seek funding from a variety of streams:

> *Relatively small amounts of money from many funding streams. No one would miss a little, but collectively it would add up.*

> *I think the type and number of potential funders will depend on the type of advice we are aiming to provide, quality assurance, etc. Some of these*

stakeholders may want to contribute towards some of the costs. At the same time some charitable trusts or national infrastructure organisations may benefit from a FANN, therefore willing to contribute. It will be necessary to map services provided/benefits delivered versus potential funders.

One comment suggested sponsorship for the FANN from, for example, the financial sector.

Whilst there are many possibilities for funding, concerns about the influence funders may have on the FANN are clear. There were also concerns about the burden a FANN may place on existing sources of funding.

4.3.7   Other issues around funding

Several respondents aired concerns that the FANN would take away resources already under intense competition, adding another competing layer for funding:

It must not take away funding from those providing the services locally or regionally as infrastructure funding is very difficult, especially for specialist infrastructure such as ours.

There is a danger that any FANN could become too general or stray into regional issues. The FANN needs to be proactive and also campaigning and ensure that funding goes to real VCS organisations.

Several comments highlighted the need for sustainability, keeping costs to a minimum by the use of virtual networks such as e-mail.

Whatever funding stream would be chosen, there is a need for it to have a minimal impact on resources for the sector. There is also a need to take into account the different resources of organisations, and the advantages and disadvantages of different funding streams.

4.4   Base for a FANN

Half (50%) of all respondents thought the FANN should be based within an existing organisation. Nearly a quarter (23%) thought it should be set up as an independent body. Over a quarter (27%) stated they did not mind (Table C.12).

There were several related reasons why people thought the FANN should be initially hosted in an existing, or an independent body. Many comments in favour of hosting the FANN within existing organisations referred to savings with regard to resources and finances, and the possibility of expanding existing services. There were also concerns over duplication of existing resources and the number of organisations currently providing similar roles or competing for similar funding. The primary reason for establishing a separate body was the degree of independence, both from other sector organisations and funders. Several comments spoke of wanting a transition from an existing body to an independent body over time.

It should be noted that this research is provisional as the concept of the FANN has yet to be specified. Respondents were asked to explain why they thought the FANN

should be hosted in a particular way, however the responses relate to individual and hypothetical concepts of what the network would be.

Figure 4.4   Comments on hosting for a FANN

Reasons for hosting	*number of responses*
Existing – save on resources	34
Existing – prevent/minimise duplication	28
Existing - financial savings	26
Independent - independence from VCS/Local Authorities	25
Existing - expand present role	21
Existing - knowledge and contacts	18
Transitional from existing to independent	16
Effective representation	11
Depends on nature of FANN / host organisation etc	8
Independent - independence from funders	4

In the sections below the comments around initial hosting of the FANN will be explored more fully.

4.4.1   Initial host – no preference

Most of those who indicated that they would not mind whether a FANN was based in an existing or new organisation stated that they gave that answer as both options had reasons for and against.

One comment thought the debate was largely shaped by the views of advisers on existing organisations:

> *Those organisations that have negative issues with existing organisations will be negative about the new organisation at first until it proves itself. Those who prefer to deal with existing organisations will cry 'not another organisation!'. The FANN will have to prove itself very quickly to satisfy everyone.*

One reason for people indicating they would not mind was that they had indicated they did not agree with the idea and there were again comments that there is not yet sufficient information to decide on specific aspects of the FANN. Without a clearly defined role, and funding strategy, many respondents were unsure about the initial host, as they were about many aspects of the FANN.

4.4.2   Initial host – existing organisation

There were many comments on the resources that could be brought by existing bodies:

> *An existing organisation should be able to have existing contacts, trained staff and resources which can be an excellent base to start up from. To employ staff and gather resources is not only costly it is often a lengthy process.*

> *Will need some backroom support and office space that would be perhaps more easily provided by an existing organisation.*

A major part of this was seen as the financial savings if the organisation was hosted by an existing body, there were a lot of comments in this area:

> *Cost, diversion of attention / funding if such a body were independent. It defeats the object if it takes both funding and expertise away from the sector!*

> *It would seem to be a waste of resources to set up an entirely new body, with all associated set-up costs for an organisation that may or may not have a sustainable future.*

The knowledge and experience that organisations could bring was also seen as important. Several people commented on this:

> *Being hosted by an existing body would provide a foundation of knowledge and expertise to support the FANN's development.*

Another main reason for hosting the FANN in an existing organisation was the number of bodies that already exist requiring funding and time resources from the sector. Comments stated that the number of national bodies had increased the risk of duplication of services and a new body could just add to this.

Some comments stated concerns that resources were being diverted away from front line services, for example:

> *There are so many organisations already, and the second tier is growing often at the expense of funding direct service providers.*

4.4.3   Initial host – transitional

Several comments spoke of the worth of a transition between hosting the body in an existing organisation for a trial period before moving it to independent status:

> *It can take time to develop a new organisational structure, if an appropriate host can be found there would be support to develop the network initially. Funding would need to be provided for the host however.*

> *Would be a sensible support mechanism to ensure that the FANN could concentrate on setting itself up and not be diverted by its infrastructure needs, which would be provided initially and then replaced when FANN is solidly operational.*

4.4.4   Initial host – independent body

The central concern over hosting the organisation in an existing body was the independence of the FANN. There were many comments on the need for the organisation to be independent from current bodies, especially large voluntary or statutory bodies. This was seen as important even if an existing body hosted the FANN.

One comment was in favour of an independent body, but thought it should have close links with an existing organisation to "help reduce bureaucracy and potential conflict by perceptions of distance and disconnection from advisers on the ground". However, another respondent stated a concern that the independence of the FANN would also be an issue of perception, rather than reality, and any links with existing organisations could be harmful.

Several respondents related concerns around how the working methods and ideas of the FANN could be skewed by the host organisation, and funding diverted.

Some comments referred to the need for the FANN to be independent of particular sectors:

> *Independence from all sectors. Funding advice is sometimes seen as the preserve of the voluntary sector (which it clearly is not) and the voluntary sector is likely to see local authorities as not a good idea as a host (hidden agendas etc).*

> *Existing infrastructure organisations etc are not independent enough of the funders to fulfil an appropriate hosting role.*

A related issue to independence from the influence of particular bodies was one of effective representation of the concerns of the sector:

> *Independence to avoid obligations to any other organisations and promote the idea that this organisation would be dancing to no-one's tune but those it provides the service to.*

> *An independent body would be able to uphold an inclusive, non-judgmental and effective network, representative of the global funding advice arena, with no hidden agenda or accountability.*

Overall, the majority were in favour of hosting the FANN within an existing body. This would save on resources, mean that knowledge could be effectively used, and could build upon existing services. However, many respondents also refer to the need for independence, both from organisations within the sector and funders without. Several respondents see independence as a necessary step once the FANN has found its footing.

4.4.5   Possible hosting organisations

There were 107 suggestions for bodies to host the FANN. National VCS organisations figured most prominently although smaller bodies such as regional FANs were also suggested (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5   Comments on hosting for a FANN

Suggestions for host organisation	number of responses
NAVCA *	39
NCVO	25
CIB/Fit4Funding	19
Regional FAN	15
Other VCS	10
CVS	5
Institute of Fundraising	4
CapacityBuilders	3
Ruralnet	3
Other funder	1
Other statutory	1

* Note: Some respondents identified NACVS (the previous name for NAVCA), these have been included in this total.

Comments around specific organisations generally referred to the expansion of existing services, for example the NAVCA FAWN, information and support services provided through RuralNet, training delivered by Fit4Funding. Several comments referred to the possibility of expanding regional FANs, using their experience and knowledge of the sector.

Many respondents suggested more than one host. Even if the new organisation were to be hosted in an existing body it would be necessary to liaise with services across the sector to ensure best practice was being used. The role of a FANN would also determine what would be the best host organisation.

4.5   Feedback from Consultative Workshops

In addition to the two surveys, the project also sought feedback on the establishment of a FANN from the two consultative workshops. These workshops were held towards the end of the project – one in Sheffield at the end of February, and another in London at the beginning of March. All 239 survey participants were invited to attend. There was plenty of interest in the workshops, with a lot of people indicating that while they were interested in taking part they were not able to attend on the dates and at the locations offered. In the end nine people attended the workshop in Sheffield, while eight people attended the London workshop. More had booked but were unable to attend on the day (Sheffield: 11; London: 16)

(N.B. Section 2.11 above outlines other feedback from the consultative workshops. In particular it summarises the feedback on the issues faced by FANs.)

4.5.1   Workshops feedback - addressing the issues faced by FANs

One of the questions posed to workshop participants was: to what extent could a Funding Advice National Network (FANN) help to address the issues faced by FANs?

Here is a summary of the key points which were raised in response :

- Providing support to funding advisers and existing FANs, through for example national sharing of information, good practice and expertise, facilitating sub-groups or specialist networking on a national basis, providing a national conference and electronic means of communication and providing resources such as a group professional indemnity insurance scheme
- Providing a national voice for funding advisers and acting as a champion for funding advice
- Having a national strategic role, e.g. to improve links with funders at national level, raise issues of sustainability, map existing provision, liaise with key national partners and co-ordinate existing resources.
- Co-ordinating appropriate training for funding advisers and promoting national standards for training of funding advisers (although there was some wariness about any imposition of such standards).

4.5.2   Workshops feedback - objectives and early work programme

Workshop participants were also asked: What should be the objectives and early work programme of a FANN? Here is a summary of the key points which were raised in response:

- Involve existing FANs at the outset of the FANN, through for example a national conference.
- The FANN should support existing FANs by, for example, sharing best practice of FANs and publishing a directory of FANs. It should address the spread of FANs across all nine regions by helping develop new FANs.
- The FANN should have a strategic role – facilitating national networking, building relationships with funders, providing a voice for the membership, facilitating sharing of good practice.
- The FANN would need a three year period – for its initial programme and funding, possibly with matched funding.
- Resources should be provided to facilitate participation.
- The value of a FANN would need to be demonstrated to funding advisers.
- The FANN could roll out a national programme of training, however some wariness was expressed about a rigid training programme.
- Provide a web portal, possibly cascading information to funding advisers.

It is clear from the above that much of the feedback to this question (and indeed the previous question – see 4.5.1 above) echoed the potential roles identified for a FANN from the survey of Funding Advice Providers (see Section 4.2.2 above). Indeed the responses are broadly in line with the ten potential key roles for a FANN shown in Figure 4.2 which were each identified by 49% or more of respondents. However, the workshop responses also highlighted a need for a FANN to support both new and existing FANs and to involve them in the development of a national network.

Further feedback from the workshops - on the potential form that a FANN might take - has been incorporated into the discussion in Chapter 5, which looks at possible models for operation of a Funding Advice National Network.

4.6   Funding Advice National Network feedback – Summary

The following provides a summary of key points from the feedback on the establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN):

- Questions on the establishment of a FANN were included in both the Survey of Funding Advice Providers and the Survey of Funding Advice Network co-ordinators. In total, 239 respondents answered survey questions on the Funding Advice National Network, including 46 Chief Officers/Chairs of organisations, 30 co-ordinators of Funding Advisers Networks and 163 funding advisers. Responses were received from the voluntary and community and the statutory sectors. Responses were received from all nine English regions.

- About half (53%) the funding advice providers were currently involved with a FAN and ten percent had been involved in one in the past. 37% had never been involved with a FAN. Involvement in FANs varied by region. Local-authority based advisers were more likely than others to be part of a FAN.

- 73% of respondents would like to see the establishment of a FANN, 6% disagreed and 21% 'did not mind'. FAN co-ordinators (82%) were most keen on the idea, followed by funding advisers (72%), then Chief Officers/Chairs (62%).

- About two-thirds or more of respondents thought that the FANN should facilitate the sharing of good practice, co-ordinate and develop resources for funding advisers, provide a strategic overview of provision and provide a national voice for funding advice. The top priorities for FAN co-ordinators for the FANN were facilitating the sharing of good practice, providing a national voice for funding advice work and facilitating national networking. These were closely followed by co-ordinating and developing resources, providing a strategic overview of provision and fostering partnerships with key national bodies.

- Overall, 57% of respondents stated they would be interested in participating in a FANN and a quarter (25%) stated they would be willing to devote time to support the development of a FANN. FAN co-ordinators were more likely than others to indicate an interest in participating in a FANN.

- Only three percent said their organisations would definitely be willing to pay an annual subscription to fund a FANN. However a further 65% said this was a possibility. Charging for services, local authorities, the Big Lottery Fund, ChangeUp and central government were all seen as possible sources of funding for a FANN.

- Whatever funding stream would be chosen, there is a need for it to have a minimal impact on resources for the sector. There is also a need to take into account the different resources of organisations, as well as the issue of sustainability.

- Half of all respondents thought the FANN should be based within an existing organisation. Nearly a quarter thought it should be set up as an independent body. The rest did not mind. Many comments in favour of hosting the FANN within an existing organisation referred to savings with regard to resources and finances, and the possibility of expanding existing services. There were also

concerns over duplication of existing resources and the number of organisations currently providing similar roles or competing for similar funding. The primary reason for setting up an independent body was the degree of independence, both from other sector organisations and funders. Several respondents wanted a transition from an existing body to an independent body over time.

- When asked for suggestions on where a FANN should be based, national VCS organisations figured most prominently (e.g. NAVCA, NCVO, Fit4Funding - the Charities Information Bureau, the Institute of Fundraising) although smaller bodies such as Regional FANs were also suggested.

5. Possible Models for Operation of a Funding Advice National Network

5.1 Introduction

The concept of establishing a *Funding Advice National Network (FANN)* has been a key theme of this research throughout. It is clear that the whole field of funding advice has emerged "bottom up" from a wide range of local initiatives, rather than from clear national vision. Where funding advisors have come together in networks, those networks are predominantly local or regional.

The question of *whether or not* funding advice needs a national body is thus an important one.

It is clear from the previous chapter that support for the creation of a specific *Funding Advice National Network* (FANN) is far from unanimous. Whilst many are firmly in favour of a clear national body to promote and supporting funding advice work, others have significant reservations.

Moreover, the survey only asked about support in very general terms: it is quite possible that different respondents may have had very different ideas of what a FANN would actually look like. However, from the survey respondents, the overall support for a FANN was relatively strong: 73% agreed with setting up a FANN, while just 6% disagreed (and 21% did not express a clear view either way, see Table C.5).

It might have been expected that support for a FANN would be near-unanimous, given that the vast majority of participants in the research were either funding advisors themselves, or managers or trustees of VCS infrastructure organisations likely to be called upon to offer funding advice. It is clear that some 6% of respondents felt the whole idea could be a waste of time and resources, and considerably more (21% of respondents) evidently had some doubts or uncertainties about the benefits.

At the two face to face workshops there was an opportunity to debate the issues in more detail. At the Sheffield workshop, all those present saw clear advantages to establishing a FANN (even though they had different views about the form it should take). At the London workshop, two participants were quite ambivalent, but no one was clearly opposed, and the others were in favour.

On balance, therefore, it is reasonable to plan for establishing a FANN on the basis that well over two thirds of relevant stakeholders clearly support the idea. But if so, those who take on the role of setting up the FANN will need to take great care to address the concerns and reservations expressed.

5.2 The Functions of a FANN

The research sought to take the broadest possible view of what a FANN might look like, and up to the workshops, deliberately avoided offering any specific model for participants to comment on. The aim was to ascertain, as far as possible:

- what key stakeholders wanted from a FANN; and
- how they felt it could best be provided.

The possible functions for a FANN as listed in the survey were chosen simply to prompt participants into expressing views on the role of a FANN, but nevertheless virtually all the possible functions listed received support from more than 50% of respondents (see Figure 4.2 for details).

Functions supported by at least 50% include:

- Facilitate sharing of good practice
- Co-ordinate/develop resources for funding advisers
- Provide a strategic overview of FA provision
- Provide a national voice for funding advice work
- Promote national standards for training
- Foster partnerships with key national bodies
- Develop measures of effectiveness of FA work
- Facilitate national networking
- Establish national quality standards for FA work

Further, the 'Act as a champion for funding advice work' role was supported by 49% of respondents. In addition, several other key roles were suggested by individual respondents.

There is no risk, therefore, that a FANN would be short of work: quite the opposite. It is clear that careful decisions will have to be made about where best to focus the energy and resources available, and to avoid duplicating what people see as best achieved through FANs.

However, the possible functions can be broken down into three main categories as follows, and it appears that *unless it can address all three areas,* a FANN is unlikely to be successful.

5.2.1 Sharing/networking/mutual support

Clearly for some funding advisers the key role is to provide a sense of community, and a vehicle for sharing ideas and information, between funding advisers who may be in very disparate situations.

From the workshops, it seems that this role for the FANN would be particularly valued by those funding advisers who are working alone and not strongly linked into existing networks. For those who are already part of well developed local or regional FANs, the case for a national network – if its role is purely about mutual support – is less clear.

But undoubtedly there is a need for the FANN to be at least the "network of last resort" for those who have few other opportunities for networking. Even so, this might mean different things to different people: for some the key need is an e-mail discussion list, and they would not want or be able to give time to face-to-face meetings; for others, the face-to-face element is essential.

Mapping of Funding Advice Networks in England and Implications for a FANN

5.2.2 Provision of specialist training and standards

The study did not seek to explore in detail how training for funding advisers should be organised, as that has been considered by other Finance Hub studies, but there was a clear sense that a FANN could play a major role in providing high quality training for funding advice – even though most would want the delivery of training to be local or regionally based.

When the issue was probed at the workshops, most recognised too that there was a difference between initial training for those new to funding advice work, and more specialist training where a national body was essential. There was also a sense from respondents that the FANN should not attempt to reinvent the wheel in this respect: a number of training programmes in funding advice already exist, notably that offered by Fit4funding which is an accredited scheme.

The issue of national standards for funding advice is clearly a very sensitive issue. Many were concerned that national standards could serve to exclude much funding advice work which is undertaken with limited resources. In particular, some funding advisers only saw their remit as providing funding advice within a very limited range of funding schemes, and (by implication) were very cautious about anything which might require them, for example, to be able to help VCOs develop fundraising strategies using a wide range of fundraising methods. Also, it is clear that only a minority of funding advisers would feel confident about advising on funding approaches such as raising loans and then repaying them through contracts for provision of public services. Others, particularly those based in local authorities, were cautious about anything which might require them to have a detailed understanding of charity law and requirements for governing documents. Also, nearly everyone recognised that no one could be an expert on all possible sources of funding, and it was recognised that European funding (for example) is a specialist area.

However, several respondents and workshop participants highlighted the very variable standard of funding advice as it currently exists, and felt that standards – even if they were only *recommended* by the FANN – would help to secure adequate resources for funding advice work.

5.2.3 Advocacy and development of funding advice work

A third clear role for a FANN would be to support the national development of funding advice provision – for example by supporting the case for establishing funding advice services where they do not currently exist, and by making the case to policy makers for the importance of funding advice as a vital ingredient for VCS development.

It is clear that a FANN could have a major role to play in this field – in fact it could be argued that the *primary* role for a FANN would be to promote the development of funding advice services in those geographical areas, or in those specialist sectors of the VCS where such support is lacking.

However, only a few respondents seemed to have a clear vision for a national role of this kind: it appears that the majority of funding advisers are mainly focussed on their own local work.

Nevertheless, it is clear on balance, that there would be a clear role for a national body to act as the overall "voice" of funding advice work in England, with the time to engage in appropriate policy work, and it seems that many (though not all) would want a national body which, at the very least, would provide guidance for the establishment of new funding advice services.

5.3   The Membership of a FANN

It was implicit from the start of the research that if a FANN is to be established, consideration needs to be given as to how it might be structured.

In our workshops, all participants who expressed a view were happy with the name *Funding Advice National Network*. The fact that it should operate as a network, linking individuals and organisations involved in providing funding advice was clearly seen as fundamental.

This implied constituency for the network is crucial to determining its structure and mode of operation. We believe it is clearest to describe the constituency for a FANN as *funding advice providers* (FAPs) – i.e. the range of individuals and organisations offering funding advice to front-line VCOs. The term "Funding Advice Providers" is intended to include:

- Individual Funding Advice Workers (FAWs) – whether based in voluntary organisations, local authorities, operating as freelance advisers, or based with funding bodies.
- Voluntary sector infrastructure organisations for whom funding advice is *part* of the service provided – this includes both general purpose local infrastructure organisations (e.g. CVSs) offering funding advice and specialised infrastructure bodies such as national offices of charities with a branch network if they provide funding advice to branches.
- Public sector or other organisations if providing similar services to the VCS.
- Organisations established *specifically* to provide funding advice services – in most cases these are charitable organisations in their own right.
- Organisations looking to establishing funding advice services in the near future.

We note that a small number of research participants felt that funding advice should always be provided free of charge to the front line VCOs seeking help, and that by implication, those who provide funding advice or fundraising assistance on a chargeable basis should be excluded from FANs and hence, by implication from a FANN. However, whilst the research did not attempt to explore this issue in detail, many existing funding advice providers charge for some services such as places on training events. Our sense is that most would wish the FANN to be open to any individual or organisation providing funding advice or wishing to do so, regardless of the terms on which such advice is provided.

Nevertheless, the FANN may wish to establish different classes of membership to cover different types of FAPs. It certainly appears evident that the FANN will need to offer both individual and organisational membership.

Because of the strong support for the FANN to be clearly a network of FAPs, we *do not* believe that the model of a professional agency providing support to FAPs would

be effective: whether or not FANN is an independent organisation, it must have a clear membership structure, with members having a clear voice in its affairs, if it is to command the support of the intended constituency.

5.4   Constitutional Structure

In terms of the formal structure for the FANN, we can see three possible models.

Model A: The *Funding Advice National Network* is established as **a new organisation, with charitable aims** such as:

- *the promotion of the voluntary and community sector by provision of training, advice and other assistance to voluntary and community sector funding advisers in England.*

On this model, the FANN would be constituted as a charitable association, charitable company or charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)[9]. It would hold its own funds and employ its own staff. The members would have full voting rights and would elect the trustees who would be charged with governance of the organisation. We consider that such a structure would need approximately seven committed and engaged trustees, perhaps comprising five persons elected from the membership, and two trustees with an external perspective.

This model has the clear advantage of independence, and ensure the FANN remains directly accountable to the FAP members – around a quarter of survey respondents felt an independent FANN would be the best model. Indeed from narrative comments it is clear that some of the research respondents saw this as essential and would be unlikely to support a FANN hosted by another organisation. On the other hand, an independently constituted FANN would take time to establish, and there are real doubts from the survey as to whether a sufficient number of individual funding advisors would be able and willing to commit the necessary time to the effective governance of such an organisation – although it is worth noting that as many as 25% of respondents said they would be willing to devote *some time* to the establishment of a FANN.

Model B: The *Funding Advice National Network* would not be a formally constituted organisation but would operate as **a *project* within an existing voluntary sector infrastructure organisation** (the "host organisation"). It could still have a membership structure on the lines described, and the members could elect a committee or steering group – but ultimate responsibility for the FANN would rest with the trustees of the host organisation. The steering group could include representation from other bodies (similar to the independent trustees in model A).

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[9] The CIO option would only be available if the FANN were established *after* the implementation of s34 of the Charities Act 2006 – likely to be from spring 2008.

This has the attraction of being much quicker to establish, and avoids many of the organisational overheads involved in setting up new organisations. In our survey, half of all respondents expressed a preference for the FANN to be hosted by an existing organisation, so this approach clearly commands stronger support than model A.

The main risk of this model is that the membership of the FANN might get sidelined, and the host organisation might wish to use the FANN as a vehicle to advance other agendas – especially if the work of the FANN involved staff shared with other roles in the host body. However, provided the host organisation made a clear commitment to establishing a formal FANN membership, and working with a properly elected FANN steering group on the lines indicated, these risks may be minimised. (A number of those who expressed a preference for independence in the longer term accepted that a hosted solution might be the only realistic policy to begin with.)

Model C: The *Funding Advice National Network* would be **a formally constituted association with charitable objects**, along the lines of model A - and thus directly responsible for its own funds - but rather than seeking to employ staff and run its work directly, it would enter in a *contract* with **a suitable host organisation** to provide all the FANN services.

On this model the FANN would be formally independent, but could draw heavily on the expertise of the host organisation, and in financial terms the FANN would just be paying (say) a quarterly fee to the host organisation to cover all its work, rather than having to track different expenditure in detail.

This provides a mid-way approach between options A and B. It gives full autonomy to the FANN without requiring the FAN trustees to take responsibility for day to day staff management, establishment of an office, etc.

However, a key disadvantage is that - unless the host organisation was small enough not to be VAT registered[10] - it would have to charge VAT on the contract, which would mean the FANN would get less value for money than employing staff directly, as the FANN itself would be unable to reclaim VAT. However, the VAT liabilities could be minimised if the host organisation agreed a *staff secondment* to the FANN. In any case, it might be worth accepting a measure of irrecoverable VAT in the arrangement in return for the greater security of operating the FANN through an established organisation.

Note: All the above models assume that the FANN would be established on an ongoing basis. All participants in the research appeared to be responding on that basis - and in fact at the workshops there were some comments that a short-life FANN would be of no real value. So whilst it might make sense to move between

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[10] Trading income *including* the income from the FANN contract would need to be under £64,000 (excluding VAT exempt income).

these models over time, there is no point in establishing a FANN unless it clearly has the support (both financially, and in terms of FAP involvement) to continue for several years.

Possible hosts

If a hosting arrangement is used (model B or C), several organisations were listed as possible hosts (see Figure 4.5 in Section 4.4.5). Some of the possible hosts were described in general terms, but four specific named voluntary bodies with a national role were named by four or more respondents:

- Fit4funding - The Charities Information Bureau (F4F)
- Institute of Fundraising (IoF)
- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO).

Given that these organisations had been named, we felt it appropriate to contact them to establish (a) whether they would in fact be interested in hosting the FANN and (b) if so, roughly what scale of operation they felt would be needed. (See Appendix F for the questions which were put to them.) However, the fact that we chose to contact these four is *not* an implication that we believe they would be more suitable than any other possible organisation.

All four responded that, in principle, they would or might be interested in hosting the FANN, though in each case with various qualifications on exactly what was wanted.

At least two of the four commented that they felt the FANN might work best as a partnership between more than one organisation. This is not something we have explored in detail, but we would raise caution on the well documented problems of partnerships. If model C were used, the FANN could, of course, contract with more than one organisation to provide different parts of the service - though we consider it vital that the FANN should have a clearly advertised single point of contact. In the case of model B, any partnership would require one organisation to be in the lead, subcontracting appropriate aspects to others (though this too has possible VAT implications).

We also noted that some of these four organisations were *already* doing substantial work which might be seen as part of the work of a FANN, if established, and we therefore asked their views on the possible implications of giving up such work if, in the end, they did not end up acting as the FANN host organisation. There were a number of detailed responses on this issue:

- NAVCA indicated that the FANN should take over the administration, promotion and servicing and monitoring of its existing FAWN (Funding Advice Workers Network) - and *also* their SEANET (Social Enterprise Advisors Network). However, this research has not attempted to explore in any way the role of social enterprise advisors.
- F4F indicated that it might be logical to transfer their existing information and training work to the FANN - but commented that unless F4F actually *became* the FANN this could not happen in practice - the resource implications were felt to be simply too great.

- NCVO indicated that their existing contact lists would be very valuable, but for Data Protection reasons they would only be willing to alert existing contacts rather than transfer them directly to the FANN. They also pointed out that NCVO currently has contracts in progress for developing various resource materials relevant for funding advice, and they were contractually bound to complete this work.
- IoF did not see any specific problems of this kind, but felt that several areas of work which the Institute is currently doing (e.g. development of information guides and toolkits, and training on tax effective giving, payroll giving grants programme) would need to be closely linked in with the work of the FANN.

5.5   Scale of Operation

One of the stated aims of the research is:

- *To advise the Finance Hub on the level of support from funding advisers for the establishment of FANN, what its objectives and early work programme should be and how it should be funded (in particular whether the organisations which employ funding advisers are willing to subscribe to it).*

We found this one of the most difficult parts of the research on which to draw a clear conclusion.

On the one hand, several FAPs made clear that even a purely voluntary-run FANN would be of some value - one person commented that it would help to have a paid person to act as co-ordinator, but felt that someone who was able to give "half a day a week" would be sufficient - i.e. a person where 0.1 FTE was allocated to the FANN.

At the other end, some respondents clearly saw a major strategic role for the FANN in negotiating with policy makers, organising a large scale training programme across the country, providing high quality materials for use by local FAPs, organising events for the FANN members, working proactively to developing funding advice services where they do not currently exist, providing administrative support to local and regional FANs, and developing quality standards for funding advice work. It seems clear that an agenda of this kind could not be undertaken unless the FANN had at least five FTE staff to co-ordinate this activity, plus a generous budget for materials and events.

Between these extremes a full range of views existed. We had hoped to use the workshops as a means of exploring participants' views on precisely what was needed from the FANN and some indication of what it would look like in terms of staff etc. But in the event, there were very few workshop participants who had a clear view of what they felt the FANN would like in terms of scale and staffing - certainly not enough offer any consensus as a conclusion from this study - and the research timescales made it impossible to consult the full range of survey participants further on this issue.

However, there was a clear consensus that the work of the FANN should include *all* the functions listed in section 4.2 - certainly we believe the FANN must make some significant impact under all three of the following subheadings, i.e.:

- *Sharing/Networking/Mutual Support*
- *Provision Of Specialist Training and Standards*
- *Advocacy and Development of Funding Advice Work*

Clearly it would be possible for a single person (say) to make *some* impact on all these, but the person's time would be divided into very small chunks, and it is likely that the impact would be minimal.

Given that four specific organisations had been suggested as possible hosts, we asked each of them to indicate - in the most general terms - what would be needed to host the FANN. Whilst each of these said "it all depends exactly what the FANN will be required to do" all four suggested answers which were generally in range of 1.5 to 3.0 staff.

In general, there was seen to be a need for:

- a co-ordinator with extensive experience of funding advice work and able to develop new resources and develop the network; and
- an administrator to support the practical requirements of the network (membership, events, etc).

Ideally, one respondent felt a third person was needed to take responsibility for spearheading the development of at least one of the key needs identified, without also having the responsibilities of co-ordinating the whole network.

However, all respondents felt that the priority was to develop something sustainable rather than a large body which could not continue and were therefore happier at the idea of going ahead with a small staffing if necessary *provided* there was clearly sufficient funding to sustain this for several years.

Many people commented in the workshops and elsewhere that a significant grant towards a FANN in 2007/08 which had to be fully spent by year end would be of little use. Whatever sum is available - from the Finance Hub or elsewhere - should be spread over at least three years.

5.6 Financial Implications

With such a broad possible range of sizes at which the FANN *could* operate, it is impossible to propose a definite budget.

However in the stated objectives for this study, we were asked "to examine the scope for the establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN) which would provide a sustainable method of networking funding advisers, achieving consistent standards of provision and addressing geographical gaps in supply across England".

Our conclusions on this are as follows:

- Sustainability is clearly very important to almost all those in the study. As noted above, there is virtually no support for the idea of a short term initiative to help develop of a FANN without the backing of long term resources.

- However, the evidence obtained suggested there is little scope for Funding Advice Providers adequately to fund a FANN purely through subscriptions and fees. Whilst most are happy with the idea of subscriptions and fees providing *part* of the income for the FANN, the potential income from such sources appears to be modest – and certainly not sufficient to cover a FANN with full time staff. The following provides an illustration of the level of income that *might* be generated from annual subscriptions, based on the survey responses:

    o Analysing the data in table C.10 shows that on average, the maximum subscription which respondents felt their organisation might be willing to pay to a FANN was about £50. The 239 survey respondents account for approximately 220 distinct organisations involved in the provision of funding advice. Table C.9 shows that around 68% indicated that they *might* be willing to pay an annual subscription (although most only said 'possibly'). If all of the 68% agreed to join the FANN – which is optimistic – this would result in approximately 150 subscriptions of £50, which would only generate £7500 p.a. Two thirds of this figure, say £5000, is perhaps a more realistic assumption.

- Of course the above illustration is necessarily somewhat speculative. In practice, the situation is more complex because, as explained, we believe the FANN needs to allow for both individual and organisational membership. Further, there *may* be other organisations – which did not take part in the surveys – which *might* be willing to join.

- There is also some scope to charge for training events, and possibly an annual conference, but based on the evidence of existing training provision for funding advisers, we doubt if such events could be charged on a full cost basis.

- To support the suggested minimum of 1.5 staff (one at a professional level and one administrative) plus overheads, office costs, travel expenses, publicity, production of materials etc. is likely to cost at least around £75,000 p.a.- say £235,000 over three years including a small allowance for inflation. It seems unlikely that subscriptions and/or any profit on training events could contribute very substantially towards this. However, we do accept that 1.5 staff is likely to be the minimum level to make any impact on the stated aim of "achieving consistent standards of provision [of funding advice] and addressing geographical gaps in supply across England".

- Ideally, we endorse the suggestion that around three staff would be needed to make a major impact on the full range of work which respondents would like to see from a FANN as set out in section 5.2. Allowing for more senior salaries and other costs being higher, this would clearly needs funding of at least £500,000 to support the FANN for three years.

- Although these are very tentative figures – not formal budgets – it is very clear that a FANN could not become a reality without significant grant funding.

- However, we are conscious that – to use the words of one respondent – a small "lean and mean" FANN would be much preferred to a larger structure which is not sustainable. It is clear that there are individuals within the funding advice field who could make some kind of FANN work with almost any level of resources – *provided* any funding is restricted purely to the establishment of the FANN, and is not time restricted or otherwise constrained in how it may be used.

6.   Conclusions and recommendations

6.1   Conclusions

This study has – within a short timescale:

- Mapped out Funding Advisers Networks (FANs) across England at local, sub-regional, regional and national levels.

- Collated detailed information on the operation of FANs. This includes: details of how to contact networks, a profile of those involved, how these networks are funded, the links between FANs, and feedback on the issues they are faced with.

- Developed a database of FANs, which has been delivered to the Finance Hub in conjunction with this report.

- Examined the scope for the establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN). In particular, it has sought and received feedback on this from a very substantial number of funding advice providers – and has identified possible models for the operation of such a national network.

6.1.1   Mapping Funding Advisers Networks

The research found a substantial level of activity around the country with respect to Funding Advisers Networks (FANs). For the purposes of this study these networks concern those involved in the provision of funding advice to voluntary and community organisations (VCOs). Many funding advisers are actively involved in FANs – and indeed there was a very high level of interest and participation in this research project from those personally involved in the provision of funding advice to VCOs.

FANs provide valuable support to many funding advisers. The networks provide, for example, important opportunities for networking with others and the sharing of good practice. Such support is important in a context where many funding advisers work in relative isolation with modest resources. Indeed, the majority of funding advisers who took part in the research provide funding advice on a part-time basis.

The study identified 42 FANs around the country:

- FANs exist at local, sub-regional, regional and national levels.
- There is plenty of variation in the way that FANs are organised. Some FANs are well established, others are quite new.
- Membership arrangements for FANs vary, e.g. some are restricted to VCOs, others are open to advisers based within both the VCS and the statutory sector.
- There are also substantial variations in the provision of FANs across the nine English regions.

Overall, FANs undertake their work with very fairly modest resources. Indeed over half of the co-ordinators of FANS which responded reported that their network had no funds or income.

The work of the different FANs is illustrated by the four Case Studies. These show some of the different ways in which FANs work and highlight the importance of such networks in providing support to funding advisers.

While there is plenty of evidence of good practice from existing FANs, these networks also face a variety of challenges in both sustaining and developing their work. Key issues reported by existing FANs in this respect include: constraints on staff time, travelling distance/time and cost, lack of funding, and reliance on informal support. Networks can be fragile and a number are no longer in existence. It is clear that more needs to done to both support existing FANs and to promote and support the development of new networks.

The research shows that while there are already existing or emerging links between many of the networks – there is scope to develop these further. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of FAN co-ordinators were interested in improving links with other FANs. The lack of a directory of existing FANs has been a barrier to this in the past. For example, often FAN co-ordinators have known relatively little about the existence of FANs in neighbouring areas / regions.

6.1.2   A Funding Advice National Network (FANN)

The research found a lot of support for the establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN); however this was not unanimous – 27% of survey respondents either disagreed (6%) or did not express a clear view (21%). The process of development of a national network would need to take account of the concerns and reservations of those not convinced of the need for a FANN.

In the workshops, all participants who expressed a view were happy with the name *Funding Advice National Network*. It was seen as fundamental that it should operate as a network, linking individuals and organisations involved in providing funding advice.

There was a clear consensus that a FANN needs to address all three of the following broad functions:

- Sharing / networking / mutual support for funding advisers.
- Provision of specialist training and standards.
- Advocacy and development of funding advice work.

However, in the initial stages of its development (i.e. in the first 12 months), it would be important for the FANN to focus on establishing the network as a membership organisation. In particular, it would be vital to fully involve its members in the shaping of its early work programme. Such involvement of members would help to promote participation and to facilitate a sense of 'ownership' of the network by its members. Further, on some topics there are likely to be differing views about the work that a FANN should undertake.

Sustainability is very important to almost all those in the study. There is virtually no support for the idea of a short term initiative to help develop of a FANN without the backing of long term resources.

However, the evidence obtained suggested there is little scope for Funding Advice Providers to adequately fund a FANN through subscriptions and fees. Whilst most

are happy with the idea of subscriptions and fees providing *part* of the income for the FANN, the potential income from such sources appears to be modest – and certainly not sufficient to cover a FANN with full time staff. It is clear that a FANN could not become a reality without significant grant funding. Further, any grant funding would need to support the work of the FANN in the medium term, i.e. for a minimum of three years.

Sustainability was seen as more important than scale – respondents preferred to start with something smaller that was sustainable, rather than attempt to establish a larger body that was not sustainable.

Three possible models for a FANN were identified by the research:

- Model A – a new organisation with charitable aims.
- Model B – a project within an existing VCS infrastructure organisation.
- Model C – a formally constituted association with charitable objects that contracts with a host organisation to provide all FANN services.

Amongst other suggestions, four voluntary bodies with a national role were identified as possible hosts for a FANN: Fit4funding, NAVCA, NCVO, Institute of Fundraising. All said they would or might be interested in hosting the FANN. Some were already doing substantial work which might be seen as part of the work of a FANN.

6.2   Recommendations

6.2.1   FANN

It is recommended that the Finance Hub takes steps to establish a Funding Advice National Network (FANN). The options for how this may be undertaken are discussed in detail in Chapter 5. It is important that existing FANs are involved in the process of establishing a FANN at the earliest possible stage.

Further, it is proposed that a FANN should have a membership structure of funding advice providers, i.e. those individuals and organisations providing funding advice to frontline VCOs. Members should have a clear voice in its affairs for it to be successful.

6.2.2   Funding Advice Networks

In addition to the establishment of a national network, there are a number of specific recommendations in respect of FANs:

- As part of the early work programme for a FANN, many participants would like to see publication of a directory of FANs, building on the database of networks which this project has delivered to the Finance Hub.[11] In particular :

  - o The directory to be publicly available on the web – and provide the details of how to contact each FAN (subject to seeking appropriate permissions from the FANs first). This would help funding advisers more easily identify

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[11] However, we would stress that consent for this would be needed from network co-ordinators, as in many cases the network can only be contacted through a named individual.

relevant networks, and assist FANs to be more easily in touch with each other.

- o Further, resources to be made available to enable the directory to be updated on a regular basis, e.g. to reflect changes/developments in existing FANs, and the emergence of new FANs.

- A key role for the early work programme for a FANN would be to take steps to facilitate the further development of FANs, including the links between networks. While the publication of a directory of FANs would clearly be an important first step in this respect, potential further tasks for a FANN would include:

  - o Facilitating the sharing of good practice between networks.
  - o Providing support for existing, new and emerging FANS.
  - o Assisting the emergence of new FANs – and helping address gaps in the provision of FANs.
  - o Encouraging the further development of links between the networks, e.g. promoting exchange visits or joint events, facilitating conferences or meetings for FAN co-ordinators.

- It would be vital to involve FANs, particularly network co-ordinators, in the development and planning of any programme of work by the FANN concerned with supporting the work of FANS.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: The Survey Forms

On the following pages we provide the forms used for the two surveys:

- Survey of Funding Advice Providers
- Survey of Funding Advisers Networks (Questionnaire for Network Co-ordinators)

These questionnaires were provided both in an online format, and as a downloadable file (in PDF format). The versions provided here show the format of the downloadable file – the questions provided in each format were the same.

Sheffield Hallam University

CENTRE FOR VOLUNTARY SECTOR RESEARCH

financehub

Survey of Funding Advice Providers

Introduction

The Centre for Voluntary Sector Research at Sheffield Hallam University has been asked by the Finance Hub to carry out a survey on networks of funding advisers with the following objectives:

- o mapping funding advisers' networks
- o seeking feedback on the potential establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN)

By 'Funding Advisers' (or 'Funding Advice Workers') we mean those individuals who provide funding advice to 'frontline' Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCOs). Where VCS is used in this questinonaire it refers to the Voluntary and Community Sector.

1 Your Details

Name

Organisation

Contact telephone

Contact email

Are you the Chief Officer of your organisation? ◯ Yes   ◯ No

Are you the Chair of the Trustees / Management Committee of this organisation? ◯ Yes   ◯ No

2 Your organisation

Which one of the following best describes the organisation where you are based (or are a trustee) (*please mark only one*)

◯ VCS infrastructure organisation - local

◯ VCS infrastructure organisation - sub regional or regional

◯ VCS infrastructure organisation - national

◯ Specialist VCO providing funding advice

◯ Other, please specify

◯ National voluntary organisation

◯ Local authority

◯ Other funding body

◯ Individual consultant

3 Funding Advice

Does your organisation provide funding advice to VCOs? ◯ Yes   ◯ No ➡ *please go to section 4 below*

Do you yourself provide funding advice to VCOs? ◯ Yes   ◯ No

If Yes, do you provide funding advice on a full-time basis? ◯ Yes   ◯ No

Type of funding advice provided by your organisation to VCOs:

☐ General   ☐ Specialist, please give brief details

4 Funding Advisers Networks

For the purposes of this research, such a network is defined by communication between groups of funding advisers from different organisations which is structured in some way. For example, this communication may involve any or all of the following: an email list, face-to-face meetings, or newsletters.

Are you involved in / a member of a Funding Advisers Network (FAN)?
(This may, for example, have the title of Funding Advisers Network, or Funding Advice Workers Network.)

◯ Yes   ◯ No

If No, have you been involved in / a member of a Funding Advisers Network in the past?

◯ Yes   ◯ No ➡ *please go to section 5*

Please give details of the Funding Advisers Network(s) that you are / have been involved in:

FAN 1

Name of network _____

Are you the co-ordinator/main contact for this network? ◯ Yes   ◯ No ➡ *please provide contact details below if known*

Co-ordinator contact details

Name   _____

Email   _____

Telephone _____

FAN 2

Name of network _____

Are you the co-ordinator/main contact for this network? ◯ Yes   ◯ No ➡ *please provide contact details below if known*

Co-ordinator contact details

Name   _____

Email   _____

Telephone _____

FAN 3

Name of network _____

Are you the co-ordinator/main contact for this network? ◯ Yes   ◯ No ➡ *please provide contact details below if known*

Co-ordinator contact details

Name   _____

Email   _____

Telephone _____

5   A Funding Advice National Network

We are contacting a wide range of people and would like to hear your initial views on the potential establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN). Such a network could, for example: provide networking and resources for funding advisers, provide a national voice for funding advice work in the sector, and/or develop quality standards for funding advice work.

I would like to see the establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN):

○ Strongly agree   ○ Agree   ○ Don't mind   ○ Disagree   ○ Strongly disagree   ○ Don't Know

What would you see as the key roles for a FANN? (*Please mark all that apply*)

☐ Provide a national voice for Funding Advice work

☐ Act as a champion for Funding Advice work

☐ Provide a strategic overview of Funding Advice provision e.g. taking initiatives to tackle gaps in provision

☐ Foster partnerships with key national bodies

☐ Facilitate sharing of good practice

☐ Facilitate national networking for Funding Advisers

☐ Co-ordinate/develop resources for Funding Advisers e.g. information and training

☐ Establish national quality standards for Funding Advice work

☐ Develop measures of effectiveness of Funding Advice work

☐ Promote national standards for training of Funding Advisers

☐ Other, please specify

Would you be interested in participating in a FANN? ○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Don't know

Would you be willing to devote time to support the development of a FANN?○ Yes   ○ No   ○ Don't know

Funding a FANN

Would your organisation be willing to pay an annual subscription to a FANN - to support the running costs of the network?

○ Yes   ○ Possibly   ○ No

If so, what level of subscription do you think your organisation would be willing to pay each year (*please mark only one*):

○ Up to £25   ○ Up to £50   ○ Up to £100   ○ Up to £200   ○ Up to £500   ○ Over £500

How else do you think a FANN should be funded? (*Please mark all that apply*)

☐ Big Lottery Fund   ☐ Charges for services, material, courses, training etc

☐ Capacity Builders (ChangeUp)   ☐ Local authorities

☐ Central government   ☐ Other, please specify

Any other comments on the issue of funding a FANN?

Base for a FANN

A FANN would need either to be hosted by an existing organisation, or set up as a new independent body. For the initial stages of a FANN, which of the following would you prefer:

○ FANN to be hosted by an existing organisation ○ FANN to be an independent body ○ Don't mind

Please explain why you have given this answer:

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If a newly established FANN was to be hosted by an existing organisation, do you have any suggestions as to which organisation might be an appropriate host?

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6. Workshops

As part of this research project, two half-day consultation workshops are being held - in Sheffield (27 February) and London (7 March). If you are interested in attending one of these workshops, please state your preference below.

○ Sheffield (28 February, afternoon)

○ London (7 March, afternoon)

○ I am interested but cannot attend on these dates

7. Other comments

Do you have any other comments on Funding Advice Networks, the FANN, or this suvey?

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Please return your completed survey as soon as possible to: Centre for Research and Evaluation, Sheffield Hallam University, Church House, City Campus, Sheffield S1 1WB

Survey of Funding Advisers Networks
Questionnaire for network co-ordinators

The Finance Hub has asked the Centre for Voluntary Sector Research at Sheffield Hallam University to carry out research on networks of funding advisers with the following objectives:
- o mapping funding advisers' networks
- o seeking feedback on the potential establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN)

In particular, we are asking co-ordinators of Funding Advisers Networks (FANs) to help us with the research by taking part in this survey. We hope that the results of this research will facilitate further improvements in the support provided to funding advisers.

By 'Funding Advisers' (or 'Funding Advice Workers') we mean those individuals who provide funding advice to 'frontline' Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCOs).

For the purposes of this research, a Funding Advisers Network is defined by communication between groups of funding advisers from different organisations which is structured in some way. For example, this communication may involve any or all of the following: an email list, face-to-face meetings, or newsletters.

Where VCS is used in this questionnaire it refers to the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Some of the information provided in section A of this survey will be used to help in the compilation of a database of FANs. Some of this information may be made public at a later date - please note your feedback on this issue is welcome. All other information is wholly confidential and all research reported will be anonymous.

N.B. This questionnaire has been designed to be completed by co-ordinators (or Secretaries / organisers / joint co-ordinators) of FANs. If you are not the co-ordinator of your network please let us know and/or pass this questionnaire on to the relevant person.

Section A - About the Network

1 Contact details of the network

Name of network _____

Contact name _____

Contact telephone _____   Contact email _____

How is the network co-ordinated? ☐ Single co-ordinator   ☐ Joint co-ordinators   ☐ Co-ordination rotates

If the FAN is based at a single organisation, please state name: _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Postcode _____

2 Your organisation

Which one of the following best describes the organisation where you are based (*please mark only one*)

◯ VCS infrastructure organisation - local

◯ VCS infrastructure organisation - sub regional or regional

◯ VCS infrastructure organisation - national

◯ Specialist VCO providing funding advice

◯ Other, please specify

◯ National voluntary organisation

◯ Local authority

◯ Other funding body

◯ Individual consultant

3 Geographical area of the network

Which of the following best describes the geographical area covered by the Network (*please mark only one*)

◯ Local   ◯ Sub-regional   ◯ Regional   ◯ National

◯ Other

Please describe the geographical area covered by the Network:

4 Aims

What are the chief aims of the network? (*Please mark all that apply*)

☐ Provide a voice for Funding Advice work

☐ Act as a champion for Funding Advice work

☐ Foster partnerships with key bodies

☐ Facilitate sharing of good practice

☐ Facilitate networking for Funding Advisers

☐ Co-ordinate/develop resources for Funding Advisers e.g. information and training

☐ Other, please specify

5 Membership

Who can be a member of the network? (*Please mark all that apply*)

☐ Funding Advisers based within VCOs

☐ Funding Advisers based within local authorities

☐ Funding Advisers based within other funders

☐ Individual consultants providing funding advice

☐ Other Funding Advisers (please specify)

☐ Voluntary and community sector organisations (VCOs)

☐ Local authorities

☐ Other funders

☐ Other, (please specify)

How many people are members of the network / involved in the network

◯ Up to 10   ◯ 11-25   ◯ 26 - 50   ◯ 51 - 100   ◯ Over 100   ◯ Don't know

Do you have any further comments on membership?

Would you be willing to provide us with a list of organisations that are members of your network (this has been requested by the Finance Hub).

◯ No   ◯ Yes ➡ Please provide this list below, or if you prefer please send the list attached to the questionnaire or seperately using the contacts at the end of this questionnaire or electronically to cre@shu.ac.uk

In addition to the members of the Network, does the Network have any other key stakeholders? If so please provide further details:

6 Activities / services provided

Which of the following are provided / facilitated by the Network? (*Please mark all that apply*)

☐ regular meetings - if so how often

☐ occasional meetings

☐ an email list

☐ a newsletter

☐ a web site / page - please give address

☐ training resources

☐ events, workshops - if so, please give brief details

☐ other information resources - please give brief details

☐ other activities / resources, please give details

Is there any other information which you'd like to give about the activities and resources provided / facilitated by the Network?

7 Links

Does the Network share information, resources, or activities with other FANs?

◯ Yes, please give details ➡

◯ No

◯ Don't know

Does the Network have links with other FANs apart from or beyond that stated above?

◯ Yes, please give details ➡

◯ No

◯ Don't know

Does the network have links with other networks of advisers of VCOs, e.g. networks of development workers, social enterprise networks?

◯ Yes, please give details ➡

◯ No

◯ Don't know

8 Income and Funding

Does the network have an annual budget ?   ◯ Yes   ◯ No

If yes, please provide the approximate figure **£**

Does the network have any income of its own?   ◯ Yes   ◯ No

How is the work of the Network funded: (*Please mark all that apply*)

☐ the Network is funded by a separate organisation as part of its work

☐ annual subscription / membership fees

☐ income from provision of services

☐ the Network has no funds or income

☐ external or other funding - please give details

Please give any further comments you have on the way that the Network is funded

Section B - Feedback from your Network

Good practice
What aspects of your Network's work do you think have worked well and why?

Barriers
What factors, if any, have hindered your Network from being more effective?

Development
What improvements would you like to see in your Network's activities / services?

What would help your Network to achieve these?

Improving links
Would the Network be interested in improving its links with other FANs?　○ Yes　　　○ Possibly　　　○ No

Please let us have your ideas for improving links between FANs:

Case studies
As part of this research we will be compiling a number of case studies of Funding Advice Networks as examples of good practice. These will be presented in the final report. If selected would you be interested in your Network being featured as one of these case studies?

○ Yes　　○ No

Section C - A Funding Advice National Network

N.B. If you personally have already answered these questions for the Funding Advice Providers Survey (also being carried out as part of this research) then you do not need to fill them in here. Please go to Section E on the last page.

We would like to hear your initial views on the potential establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN). Such a network could, for example: provide networking and resources for funding advisers, provide a national voice for funding advice work in the sector, and/or develop quality standards for funding advice work.

I would like to see the establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN):

◯ Strongly agree ◯ Agree ◯ Don't mind ◯ Disagree ◯ Strongly disagree ◯ Don't Know

What would you see as the key roles for a FANN? (*Please mark all that apply*)

☐ Provide a national voice for Funding Advice work

☐ Act as a champion for Funding Advice work

☐ Provide a strategic overview of Funding Advice provision e.g. taking initiatives to tackle gaps in provision

☐ Foster partnerships with key national bodies

☐ Facilitate sharing of good practice

☐ Facilitate national networking for Funding Advisers

☐ Co-ordinate/develop resources for Funding Advisers e.g. information and training

☐ Establish national quality standards for Funding Advice work

☐ Develop measures of effectiveness of Funding Advice work

☐ Promote national standards for training of Funding Advisers

☐ Other, please specify

How would you like the FANN to be facilitated? (*please mark all that apply*)

☐ Meetings ☐ Newsletters ☐ Website ☐ Email group ☐ Online discussion forum

☐ Other (please specify)

Would you be interested in participating in a FANN? ◯ Yes ◯ No ◯ Don't know

Would you be willing to devote time to support the development of a FANN? ◯ Yes ◯ No ◯ Don't know

Funding a FANN

Would your organisation be willing to pay an annual subscription to a FANN - to support the running costs of the network? ◯ Yes ◯ Possibly ◯ No

If so, what level of subscription do you think your organisation would be willing to pay each year (*please mark only one*):

◯ Up to £25 ◯ Up to £50 ◯ Up to £100 ◯ Up to £200 ◯ Up to £500 ◯ Over £500

How else do you think a FANN should be funded? (*Please mark all that apply*)

☐ Big Lottery Fund ☐ Charges for services, material, courses, training etc

☐ Capacitybuilders (ChangeUp) ☐ Local authorities ☐ Central government

☐ Other, please specify

Any other comments on the issue of funding a FANN:

Base for a FANN

A FANN would need either to be hosted by an existing organisation, or set up as a new independent body. For the initial stages of a FANN, which of the following would you prefer:

◯ FANN to be hosted by an existing organisation   ◯ FANN to be an independent body   ◯ Don't mind

Please explain why you have given this answer:

If a newly established FANN was to be hosted by an existing organisation, do you have any suggestions as to which organisation might be an appropriate host?

Workshops

As part of this research project, two half-day consultation workshops are being held - in Sheffield (28 February) and London (7 March). If you are interested in attending one of these workshops, please state your preference: ◯ Sheffield (28 February, afternoon)   ◯ London (7 March, afternoon)

◯ I am interested but cannot attend on these dates

Section D - Other Funding Adviser Networks

Please give details of any other Funding Advisers Network(s) that you are aware of. (**N.B.** There is no need to repeat any information which you have already provided earlier in the research.)

FAN 1   Name of network

Please provide contact details for the network co-ordinator if known

Name

Email   Telephone

FAN 2   Name of network

Please provide contact details for the network co-ordinator if known
Name

Email   Telephone

FAN 3   Name of network

Please provide contact details for the network co-ordinator if known

Name

Telephone
Email

FAN 4   Name of network

Please provide contact details for the network co-ordinator if known

Name

Telephone
Email

I have filled all four contacts and still have more contact details for FANs: ☐ Yes

Section E - Other comments

Do you have any other comments on Funding Advisors Networks and the proposed National Network, in particular any <u>benefits</u> you would anticipate from a FANN and any <u>disadvantages</u> of setting up a FANN; or any comments on this survey?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Please return your completed survey as soon as possible to: Centre for Research and Evaluation, Sheffield Hallam University, Church House, City Campus, Sheffield S1 1WB

Appendix B

Detailed survey statistics - Funding Advisers Networks

This appendix provides detailed survey statistics from the feedback from the co-ordinators of Funding Advisers Networks (FANs). Responses were collected from the Survey of Funding Advisers Networks. Please note: percentages may not always sum to 100% because of rounding.

Table B.1   Co-ordination of Funding Advisers Networks

Co-ordination	n	%
Single	17	61
Joint	6	21
Rotated	5	18
Total	28	100.0

Table B.2   Geographical area covered by Funding Advisers Networks

Geographical area	n	%
Local	11	38
Sub-regional	11	38
Regional	6	21
National	1	3
Total	29	100.0

Table B.3   Chief aims of the network

Chief aims of the network*	n	%
Facilitate networking for Funding Advisers	29	100
Facilitate sharing of good practice	26	90
Co-ordinate/develop resources for Funding Advisers e.g. information and training	19	66
Provide a voice for Funding Advice work	18	62
Foster partnerships with key bodies	18	62
Act as a champion for Funding Advice work	11	38
Other	11	38
Total	29	100.0

*respondents could answer as many as applied

Table B.4   Who can be a member of the network

Who can be a member*	n	%
Funding Advisers based within VCOs	25	86
Funding Advisers based within local authorities	23	79
Funding Advisers based within other funders	16	55
Local authorities	14	48
Voluntary and community sector organisations (VCOs)	13	45
Other Funding Advisers	10	35
Individual consultants providing funding advice	4	14
Other funders	2	7
Other	4	14
Total	29	100.0

*respondents could answer as many as applied

Table B.5   How many people are members of the network?

Members of network	n	%
Up to 10	7	24
11-25	11	38
26 – 50	5	17
51 – 100	2	7
Over 100	3	10
Don't know	1	3
Total	29	100.0

Table B.6   Which of the following are provided / facilitated by the network?

Provided / facilitated by the Network	n	%
Regular meetings	24	83
An email list	20	69
Events, workshops	14	48
Other information resources	14	48
A web site / page	13	45
Training resources	8	28
A newsletter	5	17
Occasional meetings	3	10
Other activities / resources	9	31
Total	29	100.0

Table B.7   Does the network share information, resources, or activities with other FANs?

Sharing with other FANs	n	%
Yes	17	59
No	11	38
Don't know	1	3
Total	29	100.0

Table B.8   Does the network have links with other FANs beyond those stated in B.7?

Links with other FANs	n	%
Yes	7	24
No	20	69
Don't know	2	7
Total	29	100.0

Table B.9   Does the FAN have links with other networks of advisers of VCOs, for example, development workers, enterprise networks?

Links with other networks	n	%
Yes	16	55
No	11	38
Don't know	2	7
Total	29	100.0

Table B.10   Does the network have an annual budget?

Annual budget	n	%
Yes	4	14
No	25	86
Total	29	100.0

Table B.11   Does the network have an income of its own?

Income of its own	n	%
Yes	1	4
No	25	96
Total	26	100.0

Table B.12   How is the work of the Network funded?*

Funding of FAN	n	%
The Network has no funds or income	15	52
External or other funding	7	24
The Network is funded by a separate organisation as part of its work	6	21
Income from provision of services	2	7
Annual subscription / membership fees	0	0
Total	29	100.0

*respondents could answer as many as applied

Table B.13   Would the network be interested in improving its links with other FANs?

Interested in improving links	n	%
Yes	14	48
Possibly	14	48
No	1	3
Total	29	100.0

Appendix C

Detailed survey statistics - Funding Advice National Network

This appendix provides detailed survey statistics concerning the feedback on the establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN). Responses were collected from both the Survey of Funding Advice Providers and the Survey of Funding Advice Networks.

Table C.1   Respondent profile by region

| Region | Organisation where you personally are based | | | | Total n | Total % |
	Local VCS organisation	(sub)regional VCS organisation	Local authority	Other		
South West %	48.4	0.0	29.0	22.6	31	13.5
West Midlands %	66.7	6.7	13.3	13.3	15	6.8
North West %	46.9	21.9	28.1	3.1	32	14.3
North East %	42.9	35.7	14.3	7.1	14	5.9
Yorks & Humber %	34.6	11.5	23.1	30.8	26	11.4
East Midlands %	43.6	7.7	33.3	15.4	39	16.9
East %	57.1	21.4	7.1	14.3	14	6.3
South East %	65.6	3.1	21.9	9.4	32	14.8
London %	42.9	9.5	23.8	23.8	21	10.1
Total	*48.7*	*11.1*	*23.9*	*16.4*	*237*	*100%*

Table C.2   Whether respondent provides funding advice by where they are based
(Questions asked were:
  Does your organisation provide funding advice to VCOs?
  Do you yourself provide funding advice to VCOs?
  If yes, do you provide funding advice on a full-time basis?)

| | Total | Organisation based at | | | |
		Local VCS organisation	(sub)regional VCS organisation	Local authority	Other
Organisation provides funding advice %	97.7	99.1	95.5	100.0	93.5
Total n	*221*	*110*	*22*	*46*	*31*
Personally provide funding advice %	94.0	92.7	90.0	97.8	93.1
Total n	*215*	*109*	*20*	*46*	*29*
Provide funding advice full-time %	32.0	33.7	21.1	37.8	25.9
Total n	*203*	*101*	*19*	*45*	*27*

Table C.3   Type of funding advice provided by organisations to VCOs

| Type of funding advice provided* | Total | Organisation based at | | | |
		Local VCS organisation	(sub)regional VCS organisation	Local authority	Other
General	84.2	93.6	72.7	89.1	51.6
Specialist	21.7	11.8	31.8	21.7	54.8
Total n	*221*	*110*	*22*	*46*	*31*

*Respondents could tick more than one

Table C.4   Current or previous involvement in a FAN

| Been involved in a FAN | Total | Region | | | | | | | | |
		South West	West Midlands	North West	North East	Yorks & Humber	East Midlands	East	South East	London
Yes, currently	53.4	82.8	40.0	36.7	84.6	60.0	69.2	42.9	33.3	33.3
Yes, previously	9.5	6.9	26.7	0.0	7.7	16.0	7.7	7.1	6.1	9.5
No	37.1	10.3	33.3	63.3	7.7	24.0	23.1	50.0	60.6	57.1
Total n	*221*	*29*	*15*	*30*	*13*	*25*	*39*	*14*	*33*	*21*

| Been involved in a FAN | Chair or Chief officer | | Organisation based in | | | |
	No	Yes	Local VCS organisation	(sub)regional VCS organisation	Local authority	Other
Yes, currently	59.6	27.9	55.9	45.5	66.7	38.7
Yes, previously	9.6	9.3	10.8	13.6	6.7	6.5
No	30.9	62.8	33.3	40.9	26.7	54.8
Total n	*178*	*43*	*111*	*22*	*45*	*31*

Table C.5   Would like to see the establishment of a FANN

| Would like to see establishment of a FANN | Total | Region | | | | | | | | |
		South West	West Midlands	North West	North East	Yorks & Humber	East Midlands	East	South East	London
Agree	72.9	74.1	100.0	84.4	50.0	76.0	81.1	46.2	72.7	45.5
Don't mind	20.6	25.9	0.0	12.5	33.3	16.0	18.9	46.2	18.2	31.8
Disagree	6.4	0.0	0.0	3.1	16.7	8.0	0.0	7.7	9.1	22.7
Total n	*218*	*27*	*15*	*32*	*12*	*25*	*37*	*13*	*33*	*22*

| Would like to see establishment of a FANN | Role | | | Organisation based in | | | | Involvement in a FAN | | |
	FAW	Chair/ Chief	FAN co-ord	Local VCS org	(sub)reg VCS org	Local authority	Other	Yes, currently	Yes, previously	No
Agree	74.3	61.5	81.5	70.7	65.2	80.0	76.5	77.6	58.8	68.4
Don't mind	19.7	30.8	11.1	24.2	26.1	10.0	17.6	15.2	29.4	27.6
Disagree	5.9	7.7	7.4	5.1	8.7	10.0	5.9	7.2	11.8	3.9
Total n	*152*	*39*	*27*	*99*	*23*	*50*	*34*	*125*	*17*	*76*

Table C.6   What would you see as the key roles for a FANN?

Key roles for a FANN*	Total	FAW	Role Chair/ Chief	FAN co-ord
Facilitate sharing of good practice	76.2	76.1	73.9	80.0
Co-ordinate/develop resources	68.6	71.2	56.5	73.3
Provide a strategic overview of provision	67.8	70.6	54.3	73.3
Provide a national voice	62.3	64.4	43.5	80.0
Foster partnerships with key national bodies	52.7	52.1	43.5	70.0
Promote national standards for training	52.7	57.1	41.3	46.7
Facilitate national networking	51.0	51.5	32.6	76.7
Establish national quality standards	51.0	51.5	43.5	60.0
Develop measures of effectiveness	50.6	53.4	45.7	43.3
Act as a champion	49.4	49.7	39.1	63.3
Other	7.5	7.4	6.5	10.0
Total n	*239*	*163*	*46*	*30*

Key roles for a FANN*	Involved in FAN			Organisation based in			
	Yes, current	Yes, prev	No	Local VCS org	(sub)reg VCS org	Local authority	Other
Facilitate sharing of good practice	77.4	83.3	72.6	82.7	68.0	68.5	78.4
Co-ordinate/develop resources	67.9	77.8	67.9	70.0	68.0	66.7	67.6
Provide a strategic overview of provision	71.5	50.0	65.5	64.5	76.0	70.4	64.9
Provide a national voice	67.9	66.7	52.4	61.8	64.0	63.0	62.2
Foster partnerships with key national bodies	53.3	50.0	52.4	47.3	68.0	51.9	56.8
Promote national standards for training	54.7	55.6	48.8	59.1	56.0	38.9	45.9
Facilitate national networking	54.7	55.6	44.0	47.3	52.0	51.9	62.2
Establish national quality standards	54.7	50.0	45.2	54.5	56.0	44.4	43.2
Develop measures of effectiveness	51.1	61.1	47.6	57.3	56.0	37.0	40.5
Act as a champion	54.7	44.4	41.7	49.1	52.0	46.3	59.5
Other	7.3	5.6	8.3	5.5	12.0	9.3	8.1
Total n	137	18	84	110	25	54	37

*Respondents could tick more than one

Table C.7   Would you be interested in participating in a FANN

Interested in participating in a FANN	Total	Region								
		South West	West Midlands	North West	North East	Yorks & Humber	East Midlands	East	South East	London
Yes	57.3	53.1	75.0	67.6	57.1	55.6	65.0	40.0	54.3	37.5
No	10.9	15.6	6.3	5.9	21.4	7.4	10.0	6.7	2.9	29.2
Don't know	31.8	31.3	18.8	26.5	21.4	37.0	25.0	53.3	42.9	33.3
Total n	239	32	16	34	14	27	40	15	35	24

Interested in participating in a FANN	Role			Organisation based in				Involvement in a FAN		
	FAW	Chair/ Chief	FAN co-ord	Local VCS org	(sub)reg VCS org	Local authority	Other	Yes, currently	Yes, previously	No
Yes	59.5	43.5	66.7	59.1	48.0	59.3	54.1	62.8	55.6	48.8
No	11.0	8.7	13.3	9.1	12.0	14.8	10.8	13.1	16.7	6.0
Don't know	29.4	47.8	20.0	31.8	40.0	25.9	35.1	24.1	27.8	45.2
Total n	163	46	30	110	25	54	37	137	18	84

Table C.8   Would you be willing to devote time to support the development of a FANN?

Willing to devote time	Total	Region								
		South West	West Midlands	North West	North East	Yorks & Humber	East Midlands	East	South East	London
Yes	24.7	25.0	37.5	26.5	14.3	22.2	22.5	13.3	31.4	20.8
No	31.0	31.3	25.0	20.6	35.7	37.0	27.5	40.0	31.4	41.7
Don't know	44.4	43.8	37.5	52.9	50.0	40.7	50.0	46.7	37.1	37.5
Total n	239	32	16	34	14	27	40	15	35	24

Willing to devote time	Role			Organisation based in				Involvement in FAN		
	FAW	Chair/ Chief	FAN co-ord	Local VCS org	(sub)reg VCS org	Local authority	Other	Yes, currently	Yes, previously	No
Yes	22.7	30.4	26.7	23.6	16.0	27.8	32.4	24.8	22.2	25.0
No	31.9	32.6	23.3	36.4	24.0	25.9	29.7	28.5	50.0	31.0
Don't know	45.4	37.0	50.0	40.0	60.0	46.3	37.8	46.7	27.8	44.0
Total n	163	46	30	110	25	54	37	137	18	84

Table C.9   Would your organisation be willing to pay an annual subscription to a FANN – to support the running costs of the network?

Willing to pay subscription	Total	Region								
		South West	West Midlands	North West	North East	Yorks & Humber	East Midlands	East	South East	London
Yes	2.9	3.1	6.3	2.9	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.0	5.9	4.2
Possibly	64.7	62.5	75.0	73.5	50.0	63.0	67.5	66.7	61.8	54.2
No	32.4	34.4	18.8	23.5	50.0	37.0	30.0	33.3	32.4	41.7
Total n	238	32	16	34	14	27	40	15	34	24

Willing to pay subscription	Role			Organisation based in				Involvement in FAN		
	FAW	Chair/ Chief	FAN co-ord	Local VCS org	(sub)reg VCS org	Local authority	Other	Yes, currently	Yes, previously	No
Yes	3.7	2.2	0.0	4.6	0.0	0.0	5.4	2.2	5.6	3.6
Possibly	71.6	50.0	50.0	66.1	56.0	72.2	54.1	62.8	72.2	66.3
No	24.7	47.8	50.0	29.4	44.0	27.8	40.5	35.0	22.2	30.1
Total n	162	46	30	109	25	54	37	137	18	83

Table C.10   What level of subscription do you think your organisation would be willing to pay each year?
N.B. This covers those respondents who answered 'yes' or 'possibly' in the above table (C.9).

Level of annual subscription	Total	Region								
		South West	West Midlands	North West	North East	Yorks & Humber	East Midlands	East	South East	London
Up to £25	38.4	47.1	27.3	26.1	33.3	50.0	34.8	50.0	45.0	33.3
Up to £50	40.6	35.3	45.5	43.5	33.3	25.0	43.5	37.5	50.0	41.7
Up to £100	18.8	17.6	27.3	26.1	33.3	25.0	17.4	12.5	5.0	16.7
Up to £200	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Don't know	1.4	0.0	0.0	4.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3
Total n	138	17	11	23	6	16	23	8	20	12

Level of annual subscription	Role			Organisation based in				Involvement in FAN		
	FAW	Chair/ Chief	FAN co-ord	Local VCS org	(sub)reg VCS org	Local authority	Other	Yes, currently	Yes, previously	No
Up to £25	37.3	34.8	53.8	46.3	38.5	23.3	28.6	37.8	38.5	39.2
Up to £50	42.2	39.1	30.8	43.3	15.4	46.7	38.1	45.9	46.2	31.4
Up to £100	18.6	21.7	15.4	10.4	30.8	30.0	28.6	14.9	15.4	25.5
Up to £200	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.7	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0
Don't know	1.0	4.3	0.0	0.0	7.7	0.0	4.8	0.0	0.0	3.9
Total n	102	23	13	67	13	30	21	74	13	51

Table C.11   How else do you think a FANN should be funded?

How else funded?	Total	Region								
		South West	West Midlands	North West	North East	Yorks & Humber	East Midlands	East	South East	London
Charges for services	63.2	71.9	81.3	52.9	50.0	63.0	72.5	66.7	48.6	62.5
Local authorities	45.2	43.8	56.3	44.1	50.0	33.3	55.0	46.7	42.9	33.3
Big Lottery Fund	36.8	34.4	31.3	38.2	28.6	44.4	52.5	26.7	31.4	20.8
Capacitybuilders (ChangeUp)	28.5	43.8	37.5	23.5	28.6	14.8	32.5	33.3	22.9	20.8
Central government	22.2	15.6	43.8	23.5	14.3	14.8	27.5	20.0	14.3	25.0
Other	5.0	9.4	12.5	2.9	14.3	7.4	2.5	0.0	0.0	4.2
Total n	*239*	*32*	*16*	*34*	*14*	*27*	*40*	*15*	*35*	*24*

How else funded?	Role		Organisation based in				Involvement in FAN		
	FAW	Chair/ Chief	FAN co-ord	Local VCS org	(sub)reg VCS org	Local authority	Other	Yes, currently	Yes, previously	No
Charges for services	69.3	54.3	43.3	67.3	60.0	53.7	64.9	61.3	66.7	65.5
Local authorities	47.2	39.1	43.3	47.3	40.0	40.7	45.9	43.8	44.4	47.6
Big Lottery Fund	35.6	39.1	40.0	28.2	48.0	50.0	35.1	38.0	33.3	35.7
Capacitybuilders (ChangeUp)	27.6	21.7	43.3	24.5	36.0	27.8	35.1	30.7	33.3	23.8
Central government	20.2	21.7	33.3	24.5	28.0	14.8	24.3	24.1	27.8	17.9
Other	6.1	0.0	6.7	1.8	16.0	3.7	10.8	8.0	0.0	1.2
Total n	163	46	30	110	25	54	37	137	18	84

Table C.12   Preferred host for a FANN

Preferred host	Total	Region								
		South West	West Midlands	North West	North East	Yorks & Humber	East Midlands	East	South East	London
Existing organisation	50.2	48.4	50.0	48.5	75.0	50.0	51.3	64.3	40.0	52.4
Independent body	22.5	16.1	6.3	24.2	16.7	33.3	28.2	14.3	28.6	14.3
Don't mind	27.3	35.5	43.8	27.3	8.3	16.7	20.5	21.4	31.4	33.3
Total n	227	31	16	33	12	24	39	14	35	21

Preferred host	Role		Organisation based in				Involvement in FAN		
	FAW	Chair/ Chief	FAN co-ord	Local VCS org	(sub)reg VCS org	Local authority	Other	Yes, currently	Yes, previously	No
Existing organisation	44.2	62.2	64.3	55.6	52.2	47.9	42.9	50.4	62.2	44.2
Independent body	24.7	20.0	14.3	16.7	17.4	31.3	22.9	24.4	20.0	24.7
Don't mind	31.2	17.8	21.4	27.8	30.4	20.8	34.3	25.2	17.8	31.2
Total n	154	45	28	108	23	48	35	127	45	154

Appendix D
Mapping of Existing Funding Advice Networks

In addition to this report, a key output of this project is a database which seeks to identify – as far as was possible – existing Funding Advice Networks in England known to participants at the time of the study.

In total 42 such networks were identified during the project. Their contact details are not listed in this report because many of the networks are not constituted organisations, and can only be contacted via individuals who would not necessarily wish their details to be listed in a publicly available report. However, the database of FANs has been provided to the Finance Hub – who are willing to facilitate contact in appropriate cases.

Please see Chapter 2 for a discussion of the detailed feedback from FANs. The table below provides a summary of the regional location of the 42 networks identified by the research.

Region of FANs

Region	Responded	*Identified*
National	1	2
North East	1	1
North West	5	5
Yorkshire & Humber	4	6
West Midlands	2	2
East Midlands	2	5
East	3	6
London	2	3
South East	2	3
South West	7	9
Total	*29*	*42*

List of FANs

Of the 42 networks identified, 29 responded to the survey of FANs during the short timescale of the study. These 29 are listed below:

Black Country Funding Advisors Network
Bradford District Funding Advisors Network
Camden External Funding Strategy Group
Cornwall Funding Advisors Network
County Funding Officers Support Group
Cumbria Funding Advisers Network
Devon External Funding Advisers Network (DEFAN)
Dorset Funding Advisors Network (DOFAN)
Funding Advice Network North Somerset

Funding Advice Workers Network North East
Leicestershire Funding Advisors Network
Funding East
George - The South West Funding Advisers' Forum
Gloucestershire Funding Advisors Network (GEFAN)
Greater Manchester Funding Information Group (FiG)
Greater Manchester Lottery Officers' Group
Greater Merseyside Funding Advisers Group
Herts External Resources Network
Herts VCS FAN
Informleeds
NAVCA FAWN
North Kesteven Community Development Group
North West FAN (Proposed)
Rugby Funders' Forum
STAN - The Second Tier Advisors Network (London)
Surrey Funding Advisors Network
Wiltshire And Swindon Funding Advisors Network
York And North Yorkshire Funding Advice Network
Yorkshire And Humber Regional Fawn

Research note on FANs

This study has primarily investigated the 'core funding advisers' networks – networks which identify themselves as FANs, and which were regarded as FANs by funding advisers. However, the FANs identified and mapped by this study are not the only networks in which those who provide funding advice are involved. While this study provides the starting point to mapping networks which involve funding advisers, the picture is more complex. For example, there are networks of development workers (e.g. those based within LIOs) which will involve people who provide funding advice to VCOs as part of (or alongside) their development work. There are also other networks which may include people who provide some kind of funding advice to VCOs as part of their work, such as Funders Forums or networks of social enterprise advisers.

Appendix E
Consultative workshops – discussion questions

The following are the discussion questions which were posed at the two consultative workshops on a potential Funding Advice National Network.

1. Workshops - key issues for discussion

THE FOCUS AND SUPPORT NEEDS OF FUNDING ADVICE NETWORKS

- Are Funding Advice Networks (FANs) valuable as part of VCS infrastructure – do they ultimately lead to better funding advice for front line VCOs?
- What are the key challenges facing *existing FANs* at the present time?
- What are the key issues for establishment of *new FANs*?
- To what extent could a ***Funding Advice National* Network (**FANN) help to address these issues?

2. Plenary - key issues for discussion

THE FOCUS AND OPERATION OF A FUNDING ADVICE NATIONAL NETWORK (FANN)

- What is the level of support for the establishment of a FANN?
    - *Would it be beneficial? Or a distraction?*
- What should be the objectives and early work programme of a FANN?
- How a FANN should be structured and operate?
    - *Under an existing body? Independent? Members?*
- How a FANN should be (realistically) funded?

Appendix F

FANN hosting – additional feedback

Towards the end of the research, specific additional feedback was sought and received from 4 key organisations regarding options for hosting a FANN. The four organisations were:

- Fit4funding - The Charities Information Bureau (F4F)
- Institute of Fundraising (IoF)
- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

The questions put to these organisations are reproduced below. The feedback from these questions is discussed in Chapter 5.

Q1 - In principle, would your organisation be interested in being the host for a FANN?

Yes/No/Possibly (please elaborate)

 If no, please go to Q4.

Q2 - Based on your understanding of what is needed for a FANN, please would you indicate very roughly the sort of size / shape / resources you feel would be needed if it were hosted by your organisation (in terms of money or staff numbers + other costs)

Feel free to give a range. Participants in our workshops seem to have a wide range of views, from those who feel it needs a major national organisation with five or more staff, to those who think the whole FANN could be run mainly on a voluntary basis, with just half a day a week of someone's time to co-ordinate it.

Q3 - Survey participants were surprisingly keen on the idea of the FANN generating a good deal of its resources from selling services - what do you feel about this (if the FANN were hosted by your organisation)? (This would include charging subscriptions, training fees, fees for materials etc).

Q4 - If you do <u>not</u> end up hosting the FANN (either because you don't want to, or if the role goes to another organisation) is there any work you are *currently* doing which you feel should transfer to the FANN to avoid overlap/duplication?

Q5 - Do you see any cost implications arising from q4? (For example, have you developed any resources, mailing lists or similar which you feel would logically be better managed by FANN, but where you would require some kind of payment before agreeing to transfer the materials?)

Appendix G
Methodology – detailed description

This Appendix provides a detailed description of the methodology used for the research. In particular, it summarises the work carried out in each of the three phases of the project.

As a result of the relatively short time-frame for the whole project, it was necessary for the timescales of research methods to overlap. In particular, there were overlapping timescales for the two surveys.

1. Initial phase (mid-December 2006 – January 2007)

At an early stage, a literature review was undertaken to ensure that the research built upon previous work in this field. Interviews with key stakeholders helped with the identification of the range of relevant previous work.

In tandem with the literature review, initial desk research was undertaken to identify existing networks of funding advisers ('initial mapping').This produced an initial map of Funding Advisers Network (FANs), which was then supplemented by feedback from the subsequent survey stage.

Interviews were also held with a number of key stakeholders in the initial phase of the project. These were valuable for framing and focussing the research. In particular, feedback from these interviews helped to:

- develop and focus questions for the 2 surveys;
- pilot questions for the survey of FANs;
- identify existing networks and potential case studies;
- identify relevant literature;
- provide initial feedback on the establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN).

A total of eight interviews were held with key stakeholders (these were chiefly Advisory Group members). These involved people from key infrastructure organisations concerned with funding advice, from specialist providers of funding information/advice to VCOs, and the co-ordinators of a number of Funding Advisers Networks.

2. Survey phase (mid-January to February 2007)

During this phase, two surveys were carried out, plus four case studies.

Survey Of Funding Advice Providers
The first survey – of Funding Advice Providers - had 2 aims: (a) to assist with the mapping of Funding Advisers Networks; and (b) to seek feedback on the potential establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN).

A key part of this survey involved asking people to identify FANs that they were involved in / members of. This process enabled the project team to identify additional FANs which had not come to light at the 'initial mapping' stage.

This first survey was offered as an online survey with options for participants to:

- complete the survey online
- download a PDF version of the questionnaire
- request a paper copy of the questionnaire

(See Appendix A for a copy of the survey questionnaire.)

Invitations to participate were circulated widely by email. In particular, they were sent to the following:

- members of the national FAWN email list hosted by NAVCA
- all local infrastructure organisations (LIOs)[12] which were members of NAVCA (including CVS and RCCs) – including targeted invitations to chief officers/ chairs of LIOs. (N.B. these include those LIOs which do not have link with a FAN.)
- Rural Community Councils
- local authorities – via a network of local government contacts maintained by the Local Government Association
- VCS BME regional networks
- social enterprise advisers (including the SEAN email listed hosted by NAVCA)
- other key stakeholders including a number of key specialist providers of funding information/advice
- a number of funding advisers networks also circulated details to their members
- other funding advisers and other funders (including a number of community foundations).

The response to this was encouraging – with 221 people responding to the survey. The vast majority responded via the online version of the survey. (This illustrates, for example, the feasibility of using such electronic methods for survey work with those who work for VCS infrastructure organisations.)

Survey Of Funding Advisers Networks

This second survey was targeted at the co-ordinators of existing FANs. These were identified from a combination of the 'initial mapping' and the feedback from surveys. The survey had two aims: (a) to undertake a detailed mapping of Funding Advisers Networks; and (b) to seek feedback on the potential establishment of a Funding Advice National Network (FANN) from those who had not responded to the first survey. In particular, the survey sought detailed information about the networks and feedback on their experience. (See Appendix A for a copy of the survey questionnaire.)

Further, network co-ordinators were also invited to provide details of other FANs they were aware of (if they had not already provided this in response to the first survey).

This survey was offered in the same form as the 1st survey (Funding Advice Providers), i.e. as an online survey with options for participants to:

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[12] Sometimes these organisations are referred to as 'local development agencies' for the VCS. Often a LIO (e.g. a CVS) will not employ a dedicated funding adviser as such, but may employ one or more development workers who provide funding advice as part of their wider role.

- complete the survey online
- download a PDF version of the questionnaire
- request a paper copy of the questionnaire

In a relatively short timeframe, 29 FANs responded to this survey - this was out of a total of 42 FANs identified by the research. (Please see Chapter 2 for the detailed discussion of the findings.)

The timeframe for the research meant that the two surveys overlapped. This was far from ideal. In particular, this meant that - as further FANs came to light as the work progressed - a number of FAN co-ordinators were invited to participate in the second survey relatively late in the day (and some were identified too late in the day to be able to ask them to participate). Inevitably this had an impact on the response rate. Having said that, the level of response was still very good indeed – as more than two-thirds of FAN co-ordinators were able to respond to the survey in the timeframe available .

Note: The project also undertook 'pilot' investigations of six national voluntary federations of voluntary organisations in specialist fields – to investigate the idea that FANs might exist *within* some (large) national voluntary organisations which employed a number of funding advisers at different 'branches' around the country. While the initial research indicated that this was well worth investigating, none of the national organisations contacted was able to identify that their internal provision constituted a funding advisers network as such (i.e. during the timeframe of the research).

Case Studies
During this phase of the research, four case studies of specific Funding Advisers Networks were examined in detail. Candidates for these case studies were identified from networks that had responded to the survey of FANs. The case studies were chosen, each from different regions, to illustrate different aspects of the ways in which FANs operate. The four case studies were:

- York and North Yorkshire Funding Advice Network
- Leicestershire Funding Advice Network
- Funding Advice Workers Network North East
- George – the South West Funding Advisors Forum

3. Consultation phase (late February – mid-March 2007)

Consultative workshops
In addition to the two surveys, the project also sought feedback on the establishment of a FANN from two consultative workshops. These workshops were held towards the end of the project – one in Sheffield at the end of February, and another in London at the beginning of March.

A substantial number of people were invited to take part in the workshops, including all those who participated in the two surveys (Funding Advice Providers and co-ordinators of Funding Advisers Networks). There was plenty of interest in the workshops, with a lot of people indicating that while they were interested in taking part they were not able to attend on the dates and at the locations offered. In the end

9 people attended the workshop in Sheffield, while 8 people attended the London workshop.

The workshops each involved a half-day (afternoon) session comprising:

- presentation – summary of early findings;
- discussion in small groups - 'The focus and support needs of funding advice networks';
- plenary session – 'The focus and operation of a Funding Advice National Network'.

See Appendix E for the discussion questions posed at the workshops.

The feedback from these workshops is discussed in Chapters 2, 4 and 5.

(Note on the arrangements for the workshops: For many people – distance/time/cost was a barrier to participation in the workshops. A number of people made the point that it would be much more accessible for workshops to be held in their region. However, the time/resource constraints of the project dictated that just 2 workshops were held in 2 regions. This could be regarded as a limitation of the research – ideally one would have held workshops in more than two regions. However, all regions are represented in the responses to the two surveys.)

FANN hosting – additional feedback
Towards the end of the research, specific additional feedback was sought and received from 4 key organisations regarding options for hosting a FANN. The four organisations were:

- Fit4funding - The Charities Information Bureau (F4F)
- Institute of Fundraising (IoF)
- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

The questions put to these organisations are reproduced in Appendix F. The feedback from these questions is discussed in Chapter 5.

Appendix H
List of Organisations Involved in the Study

The following is a list of 244 organisations / networks that took part in the study in one or more of the following ways:

- Respondents to the survey of Funding Advice Providers
- Respondents to the survey of FAN co-ordinators
- Participation in the consultation workshops
- Members of the Advisory Panel
- Key stakeholders interviewed, or who provided additional feedback on the options for hosting a FANN

The research team wishes to acknowledge the contribution of all these participants.

Note: In a few cases, organisations may be duplicated where the organisation name was given differently at the survey stage and the workshop stage.

2D
Acton Community Forum
Archway
Ashfield District Council
Ashfield Links Forum
Baker Brown Associates
Barnet Voluntary Service Council
Barrow and District Council for Voluntary Service
Bebington Centre for Voluntary Service
Becon
Black and Minority Ethnic Community Partnership
Black Country Funding Advisors Network
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Blackburn with Darwen CVS
Bolsover District Council
Bolton CVS
Bradford District Funding Advisors Network
Brighton and Hove Business Community Partnership
Buckinghamshire Community Action
Burnley, Pendle & Rossendale Council for Voluntary Service
BVSC
Cambridge CVS
Camden External Funding Strategy Group
Carlisle CVS
Carrick District Council
Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services
CBCD Consultancy
Central Surrey CVS
Charities Information Bureau
Chester-Le-Street and District CVS
Chorley South Ribble Council for Voluntary Service
Citizens Advice
City of York Council
Clubs for Young People
Colchester Borough Council
Community Alliance (Burnley and Padiham) Ltd.
Community First
Community First New Forest
Community Links Bromley
Community Voluntary Action - Wokingham District
Congleton District CVS
Co-operative and Mutual Solutions Ltd
Corby Borough Council

Cornwall Funding Advisors Network
County Funding Officers Support Group
Craven Voluntary Action
Creating:excellence
Croydon Voluntary Action
Cumbria Funding Advisers Network
Cumbria Youth Alliance
CVS Medway
CVS Rochdale
CVS Warwick District
Darlington CVS
Derby CVS Ltd
Derbyshire County Council
Derbyshire Dales CVS
Derbyshire Rural Community Council
Derwentside District Council
Devon and Cornwall Constabulary
Devon County Council
Devon External Funding Advisers Network (DEFAN)
Dorset Funding Advisers Network (DOFAN)
Dorset Community Action
Dorset County Council
Easington CVS
East Cornwall CVS
East Devon District Council
East Durham Trust
East Midlands Community Renewables Initiative
East Northamptonshire Council
East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Eastbourne Association of Voluntary Services
Faithworks
Fit4funding (Charities Information Bureau, Wakefield)
Foundations, National Coordinating Body for Home Improvement Agencies
Friends of The Lake District
Funding Advice Network North Somerset
Funding Advice Workers Network North East
Funding Advisors Network (Leicestershire)
Funding East
Funding Information North East
Funding Our Community
Funding South West
Gedling Community & Voluntary Services
George - The South West Funding Advisers Forum
Gilberdyke Parish Council

GK Partners
Gloucester Association for Voluntary &
Community Action
Gloucestershire Funding Advisors
Network (GEFAN)
GMCVO
Greater Manchester Funding Information
Group
Greater Manchester Lottery Officers'
Group
Greater Merseyside Funding Advisers
Group
Greenwich Co-operative Development
Agency
Groundwork East Lancashire
GVOC
Harborough District Council
Harrogate & Area Council for Voluntary
Service
Hastings Voluntary Action
Havant BC
Healthy Cross Community Project
Heritage Lottery Fund
Hertfordshire External Resources Network
Herts VCS FAN
High Peak CVS
Hull City Council
Hull CVS
Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations
Huron (FS)
Ilkley & District CVS
InformLeeds
Institute of Fundraising
Involve - Mid Devon CVS
Ipswich Council for Voluntary Service
Isle of Wight Rural Community Council
Keighley District Voluntary Services
Kerrier Inter-Link, West Cornwall
Community Network
Lambeth Voluntary Action Council
Lancaster District CVS
LCVS
Leeds Community Foundation
Leicester-Shire & Rutland Sport
Leicestershire County Council
Lincolnshire Co-operative Development
Agency
Lincolnshire County Council
London Borough of Hounslow
London Borough of Camden
London Voluntary Service Council

Mansfield Community and Voluntary
Service
Medway Council
Medway Racial Equality Council
Merton Loan Fund
Merton Voluntary Service Council
Mid Devon District Council
Middlesbrough Voluntary Development
Agency
MKCVO
Napier Ralf Associates Ltd
National Association for Voluntary and
Community Action (NAVCA)
Ncompass
NCVO
NDC Nottingham
Newcastle Under Lyme Community &
Voluntary Support
NK Community Development Group
Norfolk and Norwich Voluntary Service
Norfolk Rural Community Council
North East Regional Museums Hub
North Kesteven CVS
North Kesteven District Council
North Somerset Council
North Taunton Partnership
North Tyneside VODA
North Warwickshire CVS
North Yorkshire County Council
Northampton Volunteering Centre
Nottingham CVS
Nottinghamshire Rural Community
Council
North West FAN (proposed)
NYFVO
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council
OCVA (Oxfordshire Community &
Voluntary Action)
Okehampton & Tavistock CVS
One Step Beyond
Oxfordshire Children and Voluntary Youth
Services
Pendle Community Network
Peter Lang Children's Trust
Peterborough CVS
Plymouth Community Partnership
Poole Council for Voluntary Service
Portsmouth Council of Community
Services
Project Action
RACOL Regeneration Across
Communities of Lincolnshire

Reading Borough Council
Redcar & Cleveland Voluntary
Development Agency
Rugby Funders' Forum
Rural Community Council Leicestershire &
Rutland
Ryedale Voluntary Action
Salford Council for Voluntary Service
Salisbury District Council
Sandwell Council of Voluntary
Organisations
SAVO
Sheffield Enterprise Clusters
Shipley Council for Voluntary Service
Social Business Solutions UK
Social Enterprise Barnsley
South Derbyshire CVS
South Downs CVS
South Holland District Council
South Lakes CVS
South Leicestershire CVS
South Yorkshire Community Foundation
South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau
(SYFAB)
Southampton Voluntary Services
St Albans CVS
St Katharine & Shadwell Trust
STAN - The Second Tier Advisors
Network (London)
Stevenage World Forum for Ethnic
Communities
South Lincolnshire CVS
Stockport CVS
Suffolk ACRE
Surrey Community Action
Surrey Funding Advisors Network
Swale CVS
Tamworth CVS
Tees Valley Rural Community Council
Teignbridge CVS
Telford and Wrekin CVS
Thames Community Foundation
The Oldham Collective
The Priory Centre
Torbay Development Agency
Torbay Voluntary Service
Voluntary Action - Leeds
Voluntary Action (Chiltern and South
Bucks)
Voluntary Action Camden
Voluntary Action Charnwood
Voluntary Action for Oadby and Wigston

Voluntary Action Kirklees
Voluntary Action Luton
Voluntary Action North Somerset
Voluntary Action Oldham
Voluntary Action Stoke On Trent
Voluntary Action Swindon
Voluntary Action West Kent
Voluntary Sector North West
Warrington CVS
Warwickshire Association of Youth Clubs
Warwickshire County Council
Watford CVS
West Devon Borough Council
West Dorset District Council
West Lancashire CVS
West Norfolk Voluntary & Community
Action
West Yorkshire Social Enterprise Link
Wigan and Leigh CVS
Wiltshire and Swindon Funding Advisors
Network
Winchester Area Community Action
Winchester City Council
Woking Association of Voluntary Services
Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council
Worcester Volunteer Centre
York and North Yorkshire Funding Advice
Network
York CVS
Yorkshire and Humberside FAWN