Consultants for good©

A Community Interest Company, Limited by Guarantee Company No. 13429492

Business Plan 2023-2025

1. Purpose

Consultants for Good is a UK-wide network of specialist, charity and not for profit consultants, advisors and trainers. It is run by and for its members. Members have in common that they primarily work with the voluntary and community sector and social enterprises, defined here as Civil Society.

Members support each other through learning, shared insights, collaboration, and work opportunities, and share a commitment to harnessing our collective knowledge and experience to make a positive difference to the world.

2. History and Structure

From inception (1990) until 2019, **Consultants for Good** operated as the Management Development Network (MDN). MDN was an Unincorporated Association.

As the network has grown, **Consultants for Good** recognised the need to ensure a fit for purpose legal, financial and administrative structure, sufficiently flexible to allow for future opportunities, and which encourages the engagement of members with the network, including through groupings of interest and geography.

In May 2021 **Consultants for Good** therefore established a Community Interest Company to carry forward its purpose. All Members transferred to the new CIC and appointed a new Board of Directors to govern its work.

Consultants for Good continues to be managed and operated by committed volunteer members, supported in the day-to-day practicalities by a paid freelance administrator.

3. Strategic priorities

3.1 What we want to do.

- Strengthen opportunities to learn from each other to build our insights, skills and expertise about and for the third sector, enabling us to raise the quality standards of advisors across the UK.
- Use our collective intelligence and influence to support third sector organisations with effective decision-making, to have impact and make a difference.

- Promote **Consultants for Good** to the third sector, as a source of specialist and high-quality consultants, advisors and trainers; and ensure UK civil society has access to appropriate independent support when needed.
- Grow the network, to increase geographical, demographic and skills-based coverage, enable more members to benefit, increase our diversity through reflecting the communities with which we work, and ensure our financial sustainability.

3.2 How we want to do this.

The delivery and structure of CforG reflects a 'light-touch' network, run by and for members, all of whom have their own business commitments.

We work to deliver a programme of events, network meetings, regular online contact and other activities, that:-

- provide practical tools to enable us, as individual consultants, to hone our craft;
- widen our understanding of trends and realities in the voluntary sector and wider world;
- provide a forum for sharing of knowledge, ideas and collaboration;
- enhance **Consultants for Good work and reputation** as a community of peers for mutual support and
- assist members to build their own sustainable and effective businesses.

Within the overall network, there is also a geographically based grouping. **Consultants for Good in Scotland**, which has, for many years, operated as a group that organises its own events (sometimes Scotland-only and sometimes shared with wider membership).

4. Our business model

Our business model is simple. Members (full or associate) pay an annual fee, which provides sufficient income to meet the expenses of operating the network. Some events charge a fee, sometimes for all attendees, sometimes just for non-members, to ensure that any costs are met.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic **Consultants for Good continues** to **deliver** an increased number of events on-line, which are inexpensive to run. Going forward, we intend to offer a blended combination of online and in person events.

4.1 Income and expenditure

Consultants for Good currently has 115 full, associate and honorary members, generating revenue of approximately £10K per annum. In recent years we have seen a slight increase in total membership from a combination of new members joining, and older members retiring. Expenditure primarily consists of administrator fees, insurance, legal fees associated with the CIC structure, and events costs, including travel/fees for speakers.

Financial History and Budget	01/06/21-31/05/22	01/06/ 22 - 31/05/23	01/06/23 - 31/05/24
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	BUDGET
OPENING BALANCE	**7,777**	**9,004**	**11,688**
INCOME			
Membership income	8,879	10,574	11,435
Events	78	449	3,700
TOTAL INCOME	**8,957**	**11,023**	**15,135**
EXPENDITURE			
Administrator	6,835	6,850	7,000
Refunds for Membership	168	198	200
Events	-	317	5,750
Insurance	292	279	290
Assorted ICT, Hosting etc	-	453	450
Accountancy / bank fees	90	120	72
Digital comms	-	-	500
Miscellaneous	45	122	150
Website development	300	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**7,730**	**8,339**	**14,412**

IN YEAR SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	**1,227**	**2,684**	**723**
CLOSING BALANCE	**9,004**	**11,688**	**12,411**

4.2 Future plans.

The **Consultants for Good** network recognises that we operate in a local and global context of significant change and uncertainty. This places considerable and complex pressures on the third sector organisations we support. It also means that our members are required to be agile, and ideally commit to continuous learning and improvement to address evolving challenges and increasing complexity in our work.

By its nature, the network has a number of **unique aspects:**

- an organisation dedicated to increasing knowledge and skills
- the only not-for profit organisation for all third sector consultants, trainers and advisors
- a support network for a group of largely home-based sole-traders, that reduces isolation in our practice
- a highly-distinctive depth of knowledge and understanding from working very closely, and at length, within individual organisations
- an increasingly respected voice in the sector

Providing voluntary sector support is not generally a highly-remunerated profession, and we know that our Members are primarily motivated for altruistic reasons, but also seek to make a decent living providing high quality, valuable work at a fair price. Members are also motivated by a desire to improve the quality of life for all communities working and living in the UK, and to contribute towards improvements in broader issues such as poverty, inequality, climate change and conflict resolution.

So as a network of advisors we will remain focussed on the needs of our members, including meeting developmental needs, and sharing work opportunities. But we will also remain mindful of the significant individual and collective impact we do already have on UK civil society as a whole, and will continue to develop and build fruitful relationships within our sectors and with partner organisations.

Part of our strategy for the future necessarily includes an aspiration for growth, the reasons being to:

- ensure every third sector organisation in the UK has access to professional independent support when they need it
- support and develop the network's infrastructure and sustainability
- bring in additional skills and experiences, to better meet the broader needs of more members
- develop our position as the leading national network of third sector consultants, able to contribute when appropriate to sectoral debate and policy

- ensure that we retain some of the benefits of being a relatively small and agile network.

We will continue to work to deliver our high quality activities and events, and to meet the changing and emerging needs of members. We will also continue to focus on the ability of members to engage with and contribute to the organisation's work.

In support of this our social media and communications strategy is designed to promote **Consultants for Good** as a valuable and vibrant network for third sector advisors, and ensure that **Consultants for Good** reaches and engages effectively with its many audiences.

We estimate that there are well in excess of 1000+ charity consultants in the UK eligible for membership. Some of these already have access to other specialist networks (e.g. in relation to finance or fundraising). However we believe our network is both unique and complementary to other memberships' offerings.

We are therefore targeting and anticipating a modest increase in the full membership to 110 in 2023-24, and 140 the following year. Excluding potential minor increases in the subscription rate, this would generate additional income of between c.10-25% respectively over the next 2-3 years.

As we are a hybrid organisation with 1 part-time member of staff and no fixed premises costs, there is unlikely to be any significant increase in any of our costs, and so the Directors consider the organisation to be low risk and sustainable.