CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE TOOLKIT FOR CHARITIES

January 2021

Resources and tools for now:

	Ask yourself…	Read…	Do…
Understand your users' views and needs: The Covid-19 crisis will change your users' needs and has unequal effects on different groups. To respond to this, you'll have to understand how and why people's lives have changed. Listen to your users and use the data available to you.	• Which service users are most affected and how? Do you need to reprioritise certain groups? • Which groups do your services not reach and how can you make your services more relevant and easier to access for these groups? • What insight do frontline staff have into people's needs and priorities and how they are changing and developing?	• NPC's guide *User Voice: Putting people at the heart of impact practice* explains how charities can best harness the views and needs of their beneficiaries in order to improve their impact. • NPC blogs *How to involve users despite social distancing* and *Three things to think about when asking sensitive survey questions* provide tips on engaging with users.	• Use data. NPC has built an interactive dashboard, to show the places that are currently suffering the most from Covid-19, and those that have underlying factors—such as age, health, ethnicity, economic indicators—which may put them at risk. • Use user mapping techniques. *User mapping techniques: A guide for the social sector* outlines how these techniques can be used to better understand people's lived experiences.
Review your core mission: Some charities may have to adapt their core mission to reflect changes in the needs of their target audience and / or changes in the context, environment or system they work in.	• What is your core purpose? Is it different because of the Covid-19 crisis? • What change do you want to make? What do you want to achieve? • What are your top priorities? What activities deliver these? • How can you add the most value? Do stakeholders agree?	• Your core purpose might comprise of a vision, a mission, goals and values. NPC's publication *Strategy for impact* explains the difference. • The 'Purpose' chapter in NPC's *What makes a good charity?* highlights what to consider when reviewing your organisation's core mission. • Read about other charities that either broadened or doubled down on their core mission in response to the crisis and how they did it in NPC's *How charities have reacted to Covid-19*.	• Review your theory of change. A theory of change encourages us to reflect on our aims and plans, to discuss them with others and to make them explicit. NPC's guide is a ten step handbook to creating a theory of change, and is designed to help you do theories of change quickly. It focuses on the most valuable aspects of the approach. An introductory blog to the approach can be found here.

(Side label: Resources and tools for now)

Understand your internal and external environment: You have to understand your external environment and how developments there could impact your charity and its ambitions. You also need to understand how changes to the way you work could have an impact on the well-being of staff and volunteers.	• What issues are you addressing now? • What are the future trends in issues? • How has Covid-19 affected the environment? • What opportunities and threats does this bring up? • Who is doing what and where do you fit? • How has Covid-19 affected the well-being and resilience of your staff and volunteers? • Are staff and volunteers, who have not previously worked with people with experience of trauma, finding that more of their service users have experienced trauma?	• NPC's blog *The future of charity* explores three future scenarios for the sector, based on our appetite for change. • NPC's blog *Covid-19 means systems thinking is no longer optional* explains systems approaches and why we need them now more than ever. • Mind's website shares a list of resources to help organisations take care of their staff, including during the current crisis, and ACEVO's *Workforce wellbeing in charities* publication explores how voluntary sector leaders can support greater workforce well-being.	• Do some research on the issues you're trying to tackle. What are others in the sector saying? • Use some of the tools in NPC's *Strategy for impact* guide to better understand your external environment. • Do some structured scenario planning based on what you learn. Use NCVO's guide *Picture this: a guide to scenario planning for voluntary organisations*. • Think through how changes to service delivery are impacting staff and volunteers. For example, staff may be more likely to experience burnout if they are delivering trauma-informed services from home with a reduced amount of support around them. In this instance, NPC's *Trauma-informed approaches* guide emphasises the importance of protecting staff well-being through careful supervision and a culture of trust.
Plan for monitoring and evaluation: You will want to know if changes in your activities are reaching the right people and helping them. Plan how you will capture the information you need to do this now.	• What data do you need to continue, stop, and start collecting to know what impact you are having? • How can you capture learning in a proportionate way? • What methods should you use to collect data? How will Covid-19 impact how you collect data? • How can you follow ethical research principles, and store and protect data appropriately? Does this need to change as a result of the Covid-19 crisis?	• NPC's blog *Five types of data* explains the different types of data you should capture. • NPC's webpage on research ethics can help you understand the ethical issues that come up when service users are part of your research and Inspiring Impact's website has information on research ethics and data protection. • NPC's position paper calling for an 'evidence led social sector' is a helpful reminder of why measurement and evaluation is still relevant.	• Work through Inspiring Impact's *Data diagnostic*. It asks you a few quick questions and gives you tailored evaluation advice for a project. • Check out the range of other practical resources on the Inspiring Impact website.

			• NPC's paper on proportionate evaluation could help you think about how to prioritise evaluation efforts. • Read NPC's report *Listen and learn: How charities can use qualitative research*. • NPC blog *What does impact measurement really mean?* looks at what the popular term means.	
	Embed inclusion into your work: You need to consider equity, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of your wok.	• How can you better embed inclusion into your work? • Have you considered the impact that recent changes to your service delivery or strategy will have on inclusion?	• This London Funders webpage shares resources on equity and inclusion. • Farrer & Co have published this blog on Covid-19 and its implications for diversity and charities' employment practices. • Read NPC's blog and watch our event recording on how to shift traditional third sector evaluation and measurement practices towards a more equitable approach.	• Familiarise yourself with the updated Charity Governance Code, which has a new principle on equality, diversity and inclusion. The code is a tool for charity trustee boards to ensure their governance structures are fit for purpose.

Resources and tools for when there is more time:

		Ask yourself…	Read…	Do…
    Resources and tools for when there is more time	**Adapt your strategy**: Charities will need to adapt their medium and long-term strategies to build resilience in the sector.	• What are you trying to achieve? Has this changed since the Covid-19 crisis? • How will you develop your strategy and decide between different strategy options? • How often will you review your strategy and how will you make sure you are adapting to your environment?	• NPC's blog *A shift in strategy: How can charities recover and build a better post-covid world?* discusses what charities need to think about when adapting their strategy and shares examples from the sector. • NPC's blog *How to adapt your strategy approach for times of change* looks at how to create adaptive strategies.	• Consider how to approach strategy development. NPC's *Strategy for impact* guide shares how NPC does this and provides a framework for thinking about a strategy process.
	Redesign services: Many charities have moved services online. Charities will need to consider when and how to reintroduce face to face services once restrictions are lifted. You will need to consider what models of delivery are needed in the long term. In making these decisions, it is important for charities to involve users.	• What adaptations will be needed to enable people to access services safely? What are the essential ingredients for 'how' you deliver, which are important to retain? • What have you learnt about what works from your adapted model? Frontline staff and volunteers will have critical insights, so involve them. • How can you meaningfully involve users in decision-making about what your service should look like after the crisis? How can you involve a representative sample of users? Do you have the skills and capacity to involve users? • How can you engage and equip volunteers to strengthen your services?	• To develop a broad understanding of why user involvement matters, read NPC's report on user voice. • There is a spectrum of different approaches you can take in co-designing services. It is important to decide what approach you feel is right for you. See NPC's guide on different approaches. • NPC's blog *How to plan effective co-design* outlines some useful tips for effectively planning your chosen co-design approach. • Read NPC's blog *Implementing and evaluating effective co-design*.	• Consider how you will recruit a broad representative sample of users and, where appropriate, other key stakeholders. NPC's sampling guide can help. • Consider how you will value users' contributions in your co-design. NPC's experience on the My best life project provides a helpful example. • Consider the practicalities in advance, see NPC's blog *4 insights from working with experts by experience*. Also try using a mix of face to face and online approaches to co-design. NPC's blog on how to do user involvement well whilst social distancing provides great advice, alongside these top tips for delivering workshops. Involve have also produced a

			helpful guide for those looking to use online methods to involve users.
Work with others: As charities try to do more with less, it's increasingly important to collaborate to share resources and insights, avoid duplication and inefficiencies, extend your reach, and amplify each other's voices.	• Who is doing what in relation to your mission and where do you fit in that system? • What are the barriers to your work? Could these be reduced through collaboration? • Are you already collaborating? If so, what is working well and what isn't? • What would be the most useful form of collaboration? E.g. sharing information, co-developing or delivering a service, sharing back-office functions, or a merger. • What will it take to make collaboration work? What are the operational and strategic risks and how will these be managed?	• Mike Adamson's NPC blog *Charities must collaborate or fail* examines the potential of the social sector to change the world, if it can work together. • NPC's blog *Embracing place-based collaboration* outlines lessons from the Richmond Group of Charities' work on health and care collaboration in Somerset. • NPC's blog *How to build upon recent changes to place-based coordination* shares learning from our research in Coventry, Buckinghamshire and Sutton. • David Britton's blog *Let's get together* outlines practical tips for navigating the risks of collaboration.	• Reflect on *Building more impactful corporate-charity partnerships*. This resource explores how non-profits and for-profits can work better together and make a bigger difference for people and causes. • Proactively consider different models of mergers. *Let's talk mission and merger*, based on interviews with 50 charities, explores how mergers can be a powerful tool in achieving more for causes. It sets out the different models of merger available, dispelling the myth that mergers are always takeovers. NPC's blog *Can mergers help us to rebuild from Covid-19?* considers how charities can rethink how they work with others at a time of crisis.
Measure and assess your results—and review and share your findings: Have you been making a difference? You will need to measure and assess the data you capture. Review and share what you have learnt, and what this means for your services and strategy going forward.	• Are we are making a difference? How? To whom? • What have we learnt from our response to the Covid-19 crisis? How can we share this with others? • How can this influence our work going forward? • Are we collecting the right data to understand our impact?	• Read NPC's report on how to turn data into actions. • Read NPC's webpage on analysing and using quantitative data. • NPC's blog *How to write an impact report* shares the essential components of an impact report and a more detailed report on quality impact reporting.	• Use NPC's pages on qualitative and quantitative data. They discuss different methods for data collection. • Check out the online tools and guidance on the Inspiring Impact programme's website for charities wanting to assess their effectiveness.
Assess and strengthen your internal resources and capabilities: It's important to understand	• What are you good at, are you distinctive? Do you have evidence of your effectiveness?	• NPC's publication *What makes a good charity?* explains the key characteristics NPC believes are common in all effective charities.	• Assess your organisation against each dimension of the charity analysis framework in the assessment grid template from *What Makes*

where your strengths are and where you can add value—as well as what areas of your organisation need strengthening.	• Do you have the right skills and experiences to achieve your aims? • How does your board contribute? How effective are your decision-making processes? • What resources do you have? Do you use resources efficiently?	• NPC's guide *Above and beyond in trusteeship: What good governance looks like* explains how trustees can go beyond their essential responsibilities and support organisations to thrive. • A recent NPC report explores how to strengthen your governance and decision-making processes. You can watch recordings of our events on how trustees have built resilience during this crisis and what trustees have learnt from their responses to the pandemic.	*a good charity?* Use the results to prioritise areas for improvement. • Identify how you can improve your impact practice and data collection through Inspiring Impact's self-assessment tool *Measuring up*.