

CASE STUDY

Lloyds Bank Foundation Funding and the Star

Why the Outcomes Star works for Lloyds Bank Foundation and the charities they support

Measuring impact and tracking outcomes is high on the agenda for many charities. Although the motivation to measure impact can often come from external factors, such as reporting needs for funders or commissioners, it can also bring a lot of benefits within the service itself.

Since 2015 Triangle, the social enterprise behind the Outcomes Star, has been working with Lloyds Bank Foundation in an innovative partnership to bring these benefits to small charities, supporting them to use the Outcomes Star tools and approach for measuring and supporting change when working with people.

About the partnership

Lloyds Bank Foundation makes grants to hundreds of small and local charities, investing in their work helping people overcome complex social issues across England and Wales.



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The Foundation's grantees can also access developmental support from a variety of providers, which builds confidence and expertise among charity leaders, helping them thrive far beyond the life of their grant and equipping them to be stronger and more sustainable.

Where the Outcomes Star is a good fit with the practice and service delivery model of a beneficiary charity, Triangle provide Star training, licences and implementation support, funded by Lloyds Bank Foundation and as part of a package at a discount to Triangle's standard costs.

There are currently over 30 different versions of the Outcomes Star available under licence and with training, including Stars for youth work, housing and homelessness, mental health, children and parenting, employment and more.

There are six key reasons why the Star works for Lloyds Bank Foundation and the Charities they support.



1. Quicker and easier than starting from scratch

Because the Outcomes Stars are ready-made sector-wide tools, they allow services to focus on implementing them effectively within their own work, rather than creating a bespoke tool for themselves.

Each version of the Star is developed by Triangle in collaboration with service providers and service users for over a year before being published, and there are now over 30 different sector-specific Stars available.

"They are saved lots of time of researching options or creating a bespoke tool when there is a Star that is already clearly relevant to what they do." Grant Manager

"It provides a clear structured implementation process that subject to a charities commitment can be incorporated relatively smoothly into service delivery." Grant Manager

2. Improves the quality of what a charity records and measures

Outcomes Stars measure what matters. Each Outcomes Star consists of relevant outcome areas broken down into a Journey of Change. This means that a service is measuring not just on the severity of problems, but on the attitudes, behaviours and motivations of someone in relation to their strengths and the challenges they face.

It means services can capture client change and show the distance travelled, including progression and set-backs, rather than just end goals, or output data.

"When a charity has chosen to use the Outcomes Stars and are doing so properly, then it indicates to me that they have done some thinking and planning around their monitoring. It can mean that I am reassured that they will be able to report back and have faith in the data that they report to me." Grant Manager

3. Star data can reveal learnings about the service

In addition to evidencing outcomes and change, Star data can be a valuable source of information and learning for an organisation.

Star data can be aggregated to caseload, service or organisation-wide levels and analysed to explore patterns, looking for where the most or least change is taking place, across different outcome area and different client groups or service settings.

"A benefit of the Outcomes Star is the ability for an organisation being funded to review and adapt based on learning and findings from individual records." Grant Manager

4. A better experience for service users

The Star is unlike many measuring tools, in that it is also designed to be a positive intervention in itself and to play an integral part of one-to-one keywork between practitioner and service user. Designed to be completed collaboratively and to empower service users to understand and engage in their own support and journey, each version of the Outcomes Stars is written in accessible language and professionally designed. The Star visual at the heart of the tool is motivational and the stages in the Journey of Change support targeted action planning.

"The charities I think benefit the most are those that use the Outcomes Stars to support their key working. I think they benefit from involving the client/service users in the conversations about progress. The Star provides a useful tool for those conversations with the added bonus of capturing outcomes data." Grant Manager

"Charities can use it as a motivation tool with their service users. The Star provides direction and support to develop personal plans with beneficiaries." Grant Manager

Using the Star is reassuring: it means that charities have "done some thinking and planning around their monitoring... and I have faith in the data they report to me." – Grant Manager



5. Builds capabilities and sustainability of charities

Because the Outcomes Star is accessible, it helps services to understand the practice of outcomes and impact through the practical use of a tool, rather than just through abstract theory. In addition, because Star licences and training allow services to access all published versions of the Star at no extra cost, charities can use the tools across the services they provide. So that charities can continue to benefit from the Star after the Enhance support funding has come to an end, Triangle provide ongoing exclusive discounts for these organisations.

"Using the Star is part of us safeguarding our investment and impact – with the Outcomes Star they are more attractive to other funders for matched funding."
Grant Manager

"It demonstrates a charity's commitment to measuring outcomes as it can be time intensive." Grant Manager

6. Making the Star more accessible makes the programme more attractive

As the Stars are recognised and widely used, they add another string to the bow of a funding programme and because of the scale of the agreement with Lloyds Bank Foundation, it means Triangle can offer the Star at a more accessible cost for very small charities.

"Because the benefits of using the Stars are well known and charities are familiar with the tool I think it is a real positive to have it on the Enhance menu of support. Charities may not always want the Star but knowing we are supporting charities to use it I think is a real positive. I also think the same could be said when to talk to other funders about Enhance." Grant Manager

Watchouts and considerations

When incorporating the Outcomes Star in a funding programme, it is important to consider:

- The Star will not be appropriate for all services. Triangle provide guidance around who the Star is suitable for and recommend a conversation between Triangle and the service manager before the implementation of the Star can be set up.
- Charities may need more support to use other tools or outcomes measurement approaches as it is not always the case that the Star will meet all outcomes measurement, data recording or keyworking needs
- There may be existing negative perceptions around the Star, or confusion as to what an Outcomes Star is – usually when something that is not an official Outcomes Star has been used and has been confused with the licensed product, or when training has not been received. It is important that

time and energy is invested in the implementation of the Star to overcome this

- To implement the Star effectively, organisations who bring committed leadership, project management and the development custom Star guidelines specific to the context of their service find that they get the most out of the tool. Training is just one part of the process
- IT can be a real enabler, especially for the use of data and outcomes reporting, or it can be a stumbling block for implementation of the Star. IT solutions can be as basic as an Excel sheet, through to Triangle's dedicated web application, the Star Online, or the use of the Star in an in-house or third-party IT system.



The Star can help to show us our impact on service users and help to measure things like how the service has helped to improve their lives and build on their strengths.



The Star in action

Simply Limitless are based in Kidderminster, UK and are a place-based charity offering health and well-being support to the local population from their base in an old industrial building in town.



Lloyds Bank Foundation funds two part-time jobs at Simply Limitless, to deliver the 'Optimistic Aging' service working with people at retirement age. Paul Raper, CEO of Simply Limitless, explains that he had heard about the Star through his experience in the sector, and "we were really pleased when our Lloyds Bank Foundation Grant Manager offered the Star to us through the development programme. In any funding agreement, you need to be able to provide the difference that you're making as a charity, and the Star helps us do that."

Paul explains that they use the Well-being Star on paper during one-to-one sessions and that "the Star gives you a useful framework to ask more than just 'how do you feel' – it is more directive than about what you do next. The Star makes it very easy to see change and that can be really powerful for the people we support to be able to say, 'I can see how I have changed'."

Paul's experience of Star training was very positive but he highlights one key learning: "You have to take the training and put it into practice, and that's where the hard work comes in for managers – you have to encourage people to use it well and get it started so that it becomes part of the day-to-day."

Currently Paul and his team are focusing on telling each individual's story using the Star when they report back to Lloyds Bank Foundation and are expanding their use of the Star into other services they provide.

More information and next steps

Visit our website for previews of the Star, guidance and information: www.outcomesstar.org.uk.

Triangle are the social enterprise behind the Outcomes Star, based in the UK. If you are not based in the UK, please visit our website for the contact details of organisations supporting the Outcomes Star internationally.

The Well-being Star is designed for use with adults self-managing long term health conditions, to support and measure their progress in living as well as they can.

"The Well-being Star in itself is a therapeutic tool, it becomes part of the relationships our service providers and Link Workers build with the people we support." – Tara Case, Chief Executive, Ways to Wellness

Find out more

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