



Impact Report

2024



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Introduction

The past year has been one of continuous collaborations for The Rank Foundation.

Our community is still dealing with deep-rooted challenges, and yet we've seen powerful moments of shared learning and connection.

As we've grown in confidence and impact, we've made sure the voices of our Network are heard and respected on our strengthened platform. Their input and our experience have helped shape national conversations about place-based philanthropy.

As we approach the end of our current strategic period, we've stayed focused on what matters most: supporting our Network to lead changes in the communities they cherish.

Our work in this strategic period has centred around four key missions:

1. Challenging the consequences of inequality:

Addressing the consequences of poverty and inequality, introducing an effective Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy, and a new programme focusing on educational opportunity.

2. Championing leaders to become more impactful:

Strengthening our leadership offer, building capacity and skills especially around leadership and enterprise within our place-based projects, Time to Shine, leadership, bursaries and Rank Aspire programmes.

3. Connecting through Networks, partnerships and collaboration:

To see RankNet as the most significant challenge and opportunity ahead, to harness the knowledge, skills, passion and capabilities of the Network to much greater effect, embracing transformational technology, including media and CTVC, to improve reach and effectiveness.

4. Convening conversations about Christian faith:

Convening conversations around the values, traditions, and practices of the Christian faith, from a perspective that respects those of all faiths and none.

In 2024, we distributed £9 million in grants to support our key themes of Community, Leadership, Enterprise, and Faith. Of this, £3 million came from other funders. In total, 518 grants were awarded – 269 for amounts under £10,000 and 249 for grants over £10,000.

→ **Community** **£2.4M**

Major Grants, Place-based Programmes, Education Inequality Fund, Cost of Living Grants, RankNet activities

→ **Leadership** **£4.8M**

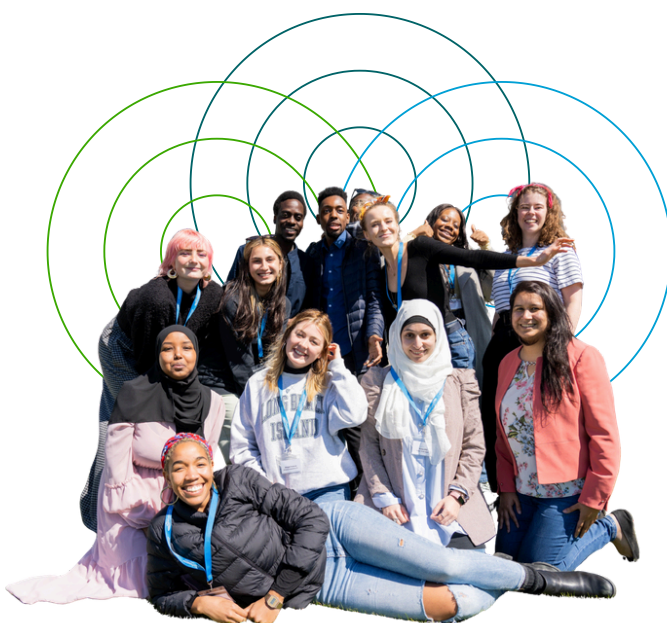
Time to Shine, Rank Aspire Programme, Start Here, School Leadership Programme, Bursaries

→ **Enterprise** **£285k**

Profit for Good, Major Grants, Repayable Grants

→ **Faith** **£1.2M**

CTVC



Community

1. Committed to our Community

Our founder's lifelong commitment to community lives on in the Rank Network.

We build deep and lasting relationships of support with our Network, going beyond traditional funding to philanthropy based on mutual respect, trust and empathy. We challenge ourselves to use our resources to maximise opportunities for our Network to learn, share and connect so they can tackle society's challenges.

This drives our first mission: to challenge the consequences of inequality. We do this, alongside our Network of leaders, in several ways:

- Investing in place-based programmes in Plymouth, Blackpool and Sunderland.
- Supporting innovative ways for organisations to address education inequality; and
- Listening carefully to the experience and insights shared by Network members working to address poverty across the UK.

Our Network has grown significantly over the last year. New major grant holders invited to the Network and approved by the grants committee include:

- Braw Tea CIC
- Centre for the Study of Philanthropy and Public Good, University of St Andrews
- Clean Slate Solutions
- Corra Foundation
- First Give
- Futures in Film CIC
- Generation Rhondda
- Healthier Heroes CIC
- Kids Matter
- Kids On Track
- Koala NW
- Live Music Now
- Longford Trust
- Place Matters c/o Right to Succeed
- Support Through Sport Youth CIC
- SuicideandCo
- The Dundee Bairns Trust
- The People's Orchestra
- The Streetlife Trust
- Two Ridings Community Foundation
- WeMindTheGap
- Woodsmith Foundation



1.1. Place-based Programmes

For more than 20 years, we have been working in 'place'. It started in Burnley in 2001. We expanded to Hull and Dundee. In 2024, we worked in Plymouth, Blackpool and Sunderland.

We identify a local leader to champion our work in each area, and in addition to core funding, we offer our other programmes and access to partnerships. Each place is unique, and we approach each new programme as such, mindful of - but not constrained by - our experience and learning from other cities.



1.1.1. Plymouth

The thriving Plymouth branch of the Rank Network continues to provide innovative and entrepreneurial responses to many of the city's health, economic and social challenges.

Of note in 2024 is a participatory grant making (PGM) programme, where the decision-making power shifts from the funders to the communities and individuals affected by the funding decision. The PGM was jointly funded by Livewell Southwest, Plymouth's integrated health and social care provider. The theme was loneliness and social isolation, which is a growing issue affecting communities across the UK. The social enterprises leading the 27 projects aimed at addressing loneliness and social isolation in Plymouth, are consistently exceeding their expected outcomes.

The 14 phase one projects, completed in 2024, engaged over 4,000 unique participants. Impact was measured using the Upshot system and the widely recognised Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Survey (SWEMWBS), ensuring consistency across all projects. Each organisation collected baseline and follow-up wellbeing surveys from participants, with 317 surveys completed so far—around 10% of the total participants.

Interim results show 78% of respondents experienced a positive change, with a calculated net social value of £2,318 per person. This equates to a return of £9 in social value for every £1 invested. Based on these figures, the combined investment of £1.5 million by Rank and Livewell Southwest is projected to deliver approximately £13.5 million in social value. Although phase two is still underway, the current data suggests a final return of between £8.50 and £9.50 for every £1 invested.

Additionally, our Plymouth repayable grants programme continues to generate interest locally, with a cumulative value of £62,000, benefiting three organisations:

- Soapbox Childrens' Theatre
- Plymouth Scrapstore
- Fotonow

1.1.2. Blackpool

Over the past year, our programme in Blackpool focused on individual wards to understand hyper-local challenges. Our partners in the city developed responses shaped by the issues facing young people who are not in education, employment or training. Blackpool has the third highest youth unemployment rate in the UK, with 47.2% of secondary school pupils receiving free school meals and 42% of families not at work.

In Claremont ward, a multi-agency approach focusing on young people furthest from the labour market led to a successful National Lottery Community Fund bid by the local partnership, Engage 4 Change. This model showed how Voluntary, Community, and Faith Sector (VCFS) partners can collaborate effectively to support young people and build capacity within the sector.

Our support for Blackpool continues through ongoing partnerships and local organisations' ongoing involvement in the Network.



1.1.3. Sunderland

In April 2024, the Board approved Sunderland as the next location for place-based investment. Trustees and the executive team saw real potential in the city's regeneration, with new industries, emerging opportunities and a growing sense of optimism. Rank's role would be to act as a 'glue' - bringing VCSE (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise) organisations and agencies together to complement physical regeneration with investment in community resilience and improved life chances.

After multiple visits, conversations with local VCSE leaders, and a deep dive into local conditions and structures, we developed a plan to complement existing approaches.

Community Anchor CoLab

Community anchor organisations are the connective tissue for local communities. They tackle poverty, respond to local needs and act as a gateway to other services, especially in times of crisis.

Recognising the vital role anchors play, and the need in Sunderland to enable them to work across geographical and statutory boundaries, we brought five anchor organisations together to form the Sunderland Community Anchor CoLab, supported by a £450k investment.

With funding freeing up each CEO's time to focus on shared learning and strategic growth, the CoLab has already secured an additional £400k from the National Lottery Community Fund for a volunteer pathway project, and £600k in core funding from a 'Funder CoLab' member.

Looking ahead, they'll focus on income diversification and strengthening recurring revenue through trading and public sector contracts.

VCSE Sector Capacity, Resilience and Enterprise

Sunderland is at a pivotal moment. To ensure local people benefit from the city's ambitious goals the VCSE sectors must also be ambitious, resilient and better recognised as a strategic partner.

To support this shift, Rank partnered with [Clore Social Leadership](#) to deliver an 8-month programme from September 2024, supporting 20 community leaders.

The programme aims to reimagine the sector's role in the city. It focuses on strengthening social leadership, reducing dependence on grants, and building the confidence and resilience needed to meet collective challenges.



Future Plans

We launched the Sunderland place-based programme in October 2024, with delegates from the VCSE, city council, health partners and the business community. Looking ahead we will build on exceptional support from the local community by creating a participatory grants programme for community groups, offer [Time to Shine](#) and [Rank Aspire](#) places to local organisations and deliver a bespoke-to-Sunderland [Profit for Good](#) programme.

While encouraging organisations to collaborate, we challenge ourselves to model collaborative leadership. A Funder CoLab will help put Sunderland on the funding map by attracting significant resources to multiply our own. We are delighted that, to date, [Roseline Foundation](#), [Greggs Foundation](#), [Community Foundation North East](#) and [Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales](#) have joined our CoLab.

While some details are yet to be finalised, Rank Foundation's £1.5m commitment to Sunderland during 2024-27 is being 'matched' by a further £1.95m from these sources.

1.2. Education Inequality Fund

We set up the educational inequality grants programme to help organisations tackle inequality for young people in education. This modest fund means we can support a wide mix of projects that make a real difference, such as the after-school provision at Winstanley School in Leicester.

The school offers a variety of activities after normal hours to encourage pupils to commit to their school in an age of ever-increasing absenteeism. Our support has funded a catering manager so every student staying late gets a hot meal.

We also supported a school in Devon for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs to build an eco-friendly classroom block, and a children's home in Surrey to bring in a staff member focused on improving how looked-after children are supported in mainstream education. Finally, reflecting our place-based approach, we're working with [Tees Valley Education](#) to develop localised careers education for primary-aged children.

In each case, third sector organisations are offering bespoke and professional care in a sector increasingly dominated by the commercial sector.

As further evidence of what may be achieved with a relatively small investment the Rank-supported research by Anne-Marie Sim and Lee Elliot-Major at Exeter University has been published.

[Heart of the Community](#)' - a guide focusing on how schools might become wider social hubs addressing issues posed by poverty and deprivation by espousing the 'Cradle to Career' model - has been well-received.

Its focus on place-based solutions to tackle inequality aligns with our first mission and offers workable, practical advice on how schools may implement similar practices.



1.3. RankNet Digital Hub

[RankNet](#) is the digital manifestation of our third mission to connect through networks, partnerships and collaboration. With the platform rebuilt complete, we launched and tested features like improved profile building and messaging, along with easier access for members on the app.

New initiatives include:

- A 'swap shop' allowing members to trade skills and expertise with each other.
- New closed groups including a Rank Trustee group and a fundraising group convened by a Time to Shine alumni.
- A mentoring platform, giving current Time to Shine leaders an opportunity to access no-cost mentoring from an experienced manager within the Network.

This year, working alongside the Fellowship team to ensure clean data, onboarding support, group access and relevant communications, we invited the Rank Fellowship alumni to join the platform. We now have over 300 members staying active.

The platform is a supportive digital space where members can connect with each other, share news and information and access our programmes and funding opportunities.



→ **Membership** **1,250**

→ **Groups** **20**

Including: Rank Fellowship, Fundraisers Network, Place-Based and AI in the Social Sector.

→ **Interaction Rate** **17.5% (August 2024)**

→ **Interaction Rate** **10.8% (December 2024)**

Profit for Good, Major Grants, Repayable Grants

→ **Contributor Rate** **1-9%**

Nielsen Norman Group findings show that we have significantly higher interaction than the average online community.

Looking ahead to 2025, a cross-team RankNet engagement strategy will continue to build membership and engagement. We're working with the Network to promote and test ways they can take the lead with convening, connecting and championing their work and that of others. RankNet members will be key to the trajectory of the platform.

1.4. Rank Leaders Action Group (RLAG)

The Foundation is supported by a planning group of 16-20 social sector leaders from within the Network, Rank staff and executive team.

Elected members are representative of Rank's wide geographical and thematic focus. The group meets quarterly to share knowledge, build connections, and exercise their leadership.

Members of the RLAG group are on a three-year rotation. In 2024 we advertised for new RankNet representatives to join and received 26 applications for 4 places – demonstrating a strong level of interest from the Network in a voluntary leadership opportunity.

In 2024 the group met four times and contributed to the planning and delivery of our annual conference and developments to RankNet digital platform. RLAG members also hosted Rank's annual conference, giving visibility to our Network's leadership and a relational approach to Network delivery.

In 2025, Rank Leaders Action Group continues to be a source of support, expertise, healthy challenge and inspiration to our executive team. We're grateful for the pivotal role they play in informing us of the issues affecting the Network.



1.5. Rank Fellowship

Led by Chair Louisa Searle, 2024 was a year of consolidation and progress for the [Fellowship](#).

Community

A new, dedicated Fellowship space on the refreshed RankNet platform, gave Fellows a place to share experiences and reconnect. It also helped us get back in touch with several Fellows who had drifted away from The Foundation. The Fellowship is now the largest single community on RankNet.

The platform also helped promote Fellowship events, such as the 'Learning through Leadership' talks. This year, we heard from Sir James Dingemans (Class of 1980), Lord Justice of Appeal, on 'Leadership in a Judicial Setting', and from Sonji Clark (Class of 1982), consultant obstetrician and deputy head of the London School of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, who spoke on 'Courage with Compassion: Leading in Today's NHS'. Both talks offered powerful, personal insights into leadership and were well received by Fellows.



***Sir James Dingemans (Class of 1980)**



***Felix Haynes (Class of 2017)**



***Sonji Clark (Class of 1982)**

Two online reunions for the 1990–2001 Fellowship classes also took place this year, helping to strengthen ties between Fellows and The Foundation.

Support

The support strand delivered strong results in 2024, with two new initiatives boosting confidence, connection and career clarity for younger Fellows.

‘Fellowship Futures’ gave recent graduates practical insights into job hunting and the current recruitment landscape, while creating space for meaningful conversations with more experienced Fellows. For the first time, the keynote speaker was a Fellow: Felix Haynes (Class of 2017), who shared his job-hunting journey and offered honest reflections on today’s recruitment landscape. Attendees left with a clearer sense of direction and tangible advice for their next steps - making networking feel useful as well as sociable.

A pilot mentoring scheme where eight undergraduates from the Class of 2020 were matched with older Fellows helped build confidence, sharpen communication skills and better understand their professional goals. Mentors also benefited - many said they learned a lot and welcomed the chance to give back to the Fellowship community.

Thanks to the success of the pilot, plans for a second mentoring phase are in place for 2025.

1.6. Annual Conference

Our annual networking conference was held at the Midland Hotel in Manchester on 13th and 14th November 2024. Over 300 people attended in-person and 50 took part online. The conference theme was ‘Great Leaders Grow Together’. It was a celebration of inclusive and inspiring leadership.

The theme was chosen by the Rank Leaders Action Group to highlight the importance of collaboration and shared growth in leadership. The conference content was also developed alongside the Network, bringing to life the passion, interests and concerns of current members. We heard from inspirational keynote speakers, Marsha Powell, CEO and Founder of BeEve charity, and actor and activist Julie Hesmondhalgh. Both spoke passionately about the need for increased opportunities for young people and communities. We had lively panel events with guest speakers and audience Q&A, and a variety of seminars delivered by Network members.

The digital experience was much improved, with upgraded tech to support live streaming of the event, as confirmed by our online attendees. The improvement means the recorded material can be shared with those who couldn't make it.

99% of in-person delegates rated the event as very good to excellent, 1% good.

What our participants said:

“As my first experience of the Rank Conference, I found it a warm and welcoming space focused on important and inspiring issues without taking itself too seriously!”

“It was brilliant to have people coming from a wide range of backgrounds, who could share knowledge from a different perspective.”

“I have personally attended a number of conferences this year and this is the best thus far, for me personally. Managing to share inspiring stories, showing change is possible, uplift people, make connections and still have fun. Congratulations!”

“The whole event was fantastic, and I came away feeling inspired and re energised. Lots of things to take away and use back in my workplace, and a renewed focus on my own plans. Huge thank you to all the Rank team for a wonderful conference.”

1.7. Training and Events

The Foundation's events team curates and facilitates events for our Network throughout the year. These events are designed to nurture leadership and build connections across our community. Training themes are requested via the RankNet platform and reviewed by the Rank Leaders Action Group, wherever possible trainers are recruited from within the Network.

We offered nine free events in 2024, attended by a total of 207 participants:

- Overcoming imposter syndrome x 2 sessions
- Strength-based reflective practice
- Introduction to fundraising
- Neurodiversity workshop
- Building social capital in our communities of practice
- Coaching skills to transform everyday interactions
- Writing successful funding bids
- Mental health first aid champion

What our participants said:

“I wanted to take time to highlight the amazing Coaching Skills to Transform Everyday Interactions session I took part in on RankNet. I had been unsure if the skills were meant for me, and I was nervous about participating in the group activities. However, these doubts were quickly dispelled in the supporting and open environment and by the openness and authenticity of the other participants.”

“Really interesting, enjoyable and thought-provoking presentation and discussion about Building Social Capital in our Communities of Practice. This inspires me to think more and more about Bridging Social Capital in Sunderland, particularly about public sector commissioning and the power dynamic there.”

“A brilliant training day on writing successful grant bids. I came home well fed; inspired by the energy in the group and new information; and equipped with a few more after-dinner stories! I feel more confident about the whole process. There were people from the whole spectrum of experience and budget management to learn from and bounce ideas off.”

We are exploring training options for 2025 with the Rank Leaders Action Group, with inclusion, diversity and belonging training having a high priority.

1.8. Bursaries

Development bursaries are available to our Network members. They can apply for a maximum of £1,000 per applicant per year in support of their professional development.

→ Total applications	77
→ Bursaries awarded	62
→ Applications declined	15

The applications were in support of a range of skills-based training courses including fundraising, digital skills, photography and film making. As part of the evaluation process successful applicants submit a blog to RankNet reflecting on their learning and sharing their experiences with Network peers.

1.9. Garden Walk Coworking Space

The [Coworking Space](#) in Shoreditch, London is our 'bricks and mortar' commitment to community, partnerships and collaboration. In 2024 we exceeded our occupancy target of 65% to reach 74% by December. We now have 241 users registered on our booking system.

The community has gone from strength to strength, with successful events, such as Members' Share and Connect, breakfasts, post-work events, craft and yoga sessions, and many opportunities for our tenants to network and collaborate.



Exemplifying our founder's entrepreneurial spirit we introduced 'special offers' such as hot desk bundles, time limited offers for meeting rooms, and day desk memberships to offer customers the flexibility they need.

Informed by tenant surveys, we have created two new meeting rooms and installed two additional phone booths. In 2025 we will welcome new tenants, and we are increasing the number of rentable desks by 32%.



1.10. CTVC Media and Digital Support

In early 2024, we launched the Rank and [CTVC](#) Media Support Programme which gave organisations from across the Network the opportunity to apply for a wide range of media support. In total, 46 applications from the Network and 10 projects were selected.

For the remainder of 2024, CTVC travelled across the UK and delivered:

- **Podcast training** for Compass Advocacy Network (CAN) and Ethos
- **Social Media Strategy Support** for Reaching Higher, Street Soccer Scotland and St Paul's Forum
- **Film Framework writing** for The Country Trust
- **Event filming and content creation** for Empowerment
- **Video Production** for Wellbeing Works and Cancer Fund for Children.

By Spring 2025, CTVC will have completed five further films with prisoners and ex-offenders for Junction 42.

What our participants said:

“This was such a great idea for a programme and I'm hugely grateful for it having been proposed and for us to be beneficiaries of it. As a charity, this can be an area that can be difficult to get funding/support for and was something we had been actively trying to source just before the media support programme was announced but based on the quotes we had been given at that point, weren't going to be able to go ahead with it.”

“Would recommend to others! Highly satisfied with the clarity, structure, and flexibility of the support programme... Pleased with the entire process and finished the programme with a stronger, more refined marketing strategy that I can effectively oversee and adapt.”

“We have observed growth in two key areas: our mailing list and engagement on social media platforms such as our website, Instagram, and LinkedIn—where most of our partnerships are formed.”

Alongside the media support programme, CTVC provided further media support and training to RankNet members with a range of online training sessions and face-to-face workshops at conferences.



2. Strengthening Leadership

Strong leaders are vital to the social sector. This fact drives our second mission: championing leaders to become more impactful. In the last year, we continued to invest in leadership programmes that nurture purposeful, confident, and inspiring leaders who go on to achieve extraordinary things.

2.1. Start Here, Northern Ireland

Start Here is a skills and employment programme to aid recovery, resilience, and sustainability in Sports and VCSE organisations, funded by the Department for Communities Northern Ireland. March 2024 marked the start of the third and final year of investing in just over 100 jobs.

At the start of the year, we recruited a new Events and Engagement Officer who also participated in the Time to Shine programme. Throughout the year, we continued to deliver our programme of Networking and development opportunities for the 100 postholders and their managers.



The Summer Conference held in Belfast brought all postholders together for a series of professional development workshops. The final residential of the programme took place in October and focused on the theme of leading through change and uncertainty. Managers also developed their leadership skills through workshops such as delegation, feedback, difficult conversations and staff engagement and fundraising. Several organisations also received one-to-one support from a fundraising consultant.

The programme has created stronger connections across the sector in Northern Ireland – and the Network. [ROC UK](#), [The Turnaround Project](#) and Ulster Camogie discussed their journey so far, lessons learned along the way and the impact of the programme on their organisations at the Rank Annual Conference.

The evaluation is underway, but already it's clear that Start Here has built confidence, strengthened teams, and increased the sustainability of the VCSE organisations involved. During 2025, we will explore how we can continue to support and strengthen the Rank Network in Northern Ireland.

What our participants said:

“Although I joined Start Here in its final year, I've always felt incredibly welcomed, valued and encouraged by everyone involved. I leave each Rank event feeling inspired, motivated, and deeply grateful for the incredible people I get to connect with.”

“The impact on the Start Here programme has been significant for us. We have had a trainee who has benefitted from support, training, Networking and experience. As an organisation we have found being part of Start Here beneficial and as a community, we have been able to nurture a community leader.”

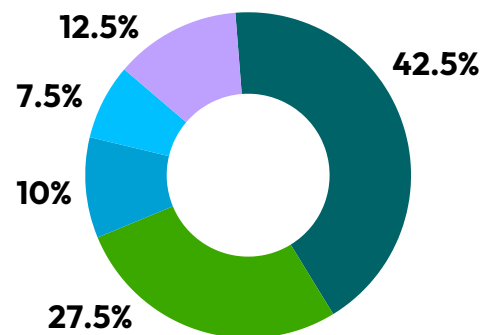
“If I could just feedback on how beneficial it's been to have become part of Rank through this as well...being able to access RankNet, the Media Support Programme, Swap Shop and other funding and opportunities through it alongside the main post funding and the upskilling grant has just been brilliant”

2.2. Time to Shine

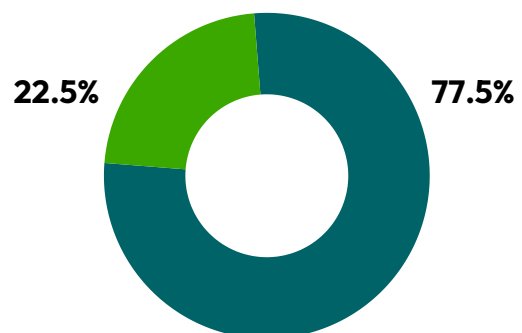
The [Time to Shine](#) leadership programme funds purposeful full-time roles within the social sector paid at Real Living Wage. It is a personal development programme for people who are just starting their career in the social sector that simultaneously develops capacity within the host organisation.

The programme works with charities and social enterprises to identify a clear organisational need. Following an application process, the charity is awarded a grant to employ a Time to Shine leader full-time for 12 months. A leadership programme connects participants with Time to Shine peers across the UK. The programme includes conferences, Action Learning Sets, independent learning, personal development and network building opportunities.

In 2024 we welcomed 40 leaders and organisations onto Time to Shine. We partnered with a philanthropic donor who co-funded four Time to Shine leaders, with an emphasis on research and development in Scotland.



- 17 T2S leaders employed at the host organisation following the programme
- 11 T2S leaders are seeking career opportunities within the sector
- 4 T2S leaders have found opportunities outside of the sector
- 3 T2S have found employment opportunities within the sector
- 5 T2S leaders withdrew before programme ended



- 31 T2S leaders staying in the social sector

Feedback from T2S leaders:

“Over my year, I have developed key skills in fundraising and project management. Most recently, a large project application of £75k that I submitted to help fund our music provision was successful! As my first office job, I have learnt so much about workplace culture, communication skills, and decision making. I have also had to present in front of a large audience. I have done so many things this year that I never thought I would be able to do. The year has shown that I can do hard things, things that I doubted I could do and has shown my own potential. I have developed both personally and professionally, and for this I am so grateful.”

Beth Hyatt, Worcester Snoezelen

“This has helped me develop a variety of skills including grant writing, event delivery, project planning, stakeholder development and general administration tasks. This has made me far more employable as an individual, while simultaneously having a positive impact on the organisation. Through events and grants I have managed to raise £90k for the charity which has been spread across core, project and capital costs and helped to develop both the charity and our social enterprise.”

Rowan Gibby, The Turnaround Project

“My first T2S meeting I felt so nervous but I was made so welcome. It was a large group, and I did think to myself ‘do I belong here?’ Yes, I did! I was so happy I had been given the opportunity to join the Rank family, and I now have a full-time position, and I am so grateful for allowing myself to progress and find my dream job in my community.”

Maxine Antcliff, St Michaels Youth Project

Feedback from T2S managers:

“The Programme has supported my development in a number of ways. The conferences have been particularly useful in building and refreshing leadership and management skills and providing valuable Networking opportunities. I have implemented many learnings from some of the sessions such as reflective practice (brilliant session!) and presenting with confidence. Above all, I think the Programme has helped me to see beyond my own organisation, realise that organisational issues are rarely unique and feel part of a wider community with shared aspirations.”

Beccy Murrell, Maundy Relief

“The T2S programme has supported my personal development from the very beginning. Back in 2019, I joined my organisation as a T2S leader. At that time, I never would have imagined that I would sit here, almost six years later, as a manager who was part of the same programme. It has been an immense privilege to experience T2S again this year and as someone who was new to managing, the programme has been an immense support to me. From the peer support sessions to the regular conferences, to the webinars and workshops offered, the programme has given me so many resources and so many people to learn from as I began a new chapter of my career.”

Alex Geaney, Horatio’s Garden



2.3. Rank Aspire Programme

The [Rank Aspire Programme](#) (RAP) invests in young people, aged 18 to 24, who may have fewer opportunities to prosper than their peers. The programme offers young leaders, aged 18–25, a 12-month, Living Wage work placement based on a project within the Network. A further training bursary of £1,200 supports the young leaders' development. The Rank team meets with the leaders three times a year at a residential programme.

In 2024 the launch conference at Hinsley Hall covered speaking with confidence, sharing your story, goal setting. The review residential in Glaramara included team building, outdoor activities, giving and receiving feedback to support learning.

In 2024 14 young leaders and host organisations participated in RAP. Four posts were co-funded by [Catalyst for Impact](#), for young leaders in Scotland, predominately Dundee. This partnership enabled us to pilot the impact of funding young leaders for up to two years (year 1 at 100% and year 2 at 50%). This partnership comes to an end in September 2025, and we will evaluate its impact on influencing future programme developments.

What our participants said:

"I have had a learning experience that feels invaluable. I have gained skills and been pushed in ways that I believe have helped me grow not just as a person but in and around youth work too. I have learned and been inspired by good leaders around me who have helped me to determine what a good leader looks like."

"The activities were so much fun, they each made for great bonding opportunities between us, sharing our experiences, understanding that realistically we're all very similar in our own ways. Some of the games we played I will be taking into my youth club and group sessions at work. All the sessions were well planned, each allowing us to understand ourselves, each other and our work better. They also enhanced various capabilities and helped to push me further."

2.4 School Leadership Programme

During 2024 the [School Leadership Award](#) programme supported 75 sixth formers from independent, state maintained, academy and free schools across the UK. Of the 65 schools participating, 44% are from outside the independent sector. Students from within the independent sector are all recipients of means-tested bursary funding (the majority at a high level) while most of their state school peers are eligible for free school meals or pupil premium funding. We value the rich diversity of schools within the scheme, which allows fruitful collaboration across the sectors.



This year saw our first award holder with significant learning disabilities, who displays clear leadership ability and potential. Their specialist school aims to provide an excellent education for pupils with complex medical conditions or serious physical disabilities in a safe and nurturing environment. They are clearly benefiting from their participation in the programme, as recognised by the Head of the Specialist Academy: 'This is amazing! Thank you for your continued support, and the opportunity that you've provided our student with!'

This student, along with their peers, made a significant contribution to our Leadership Event, held over 24 hours at Chester University. The classes of 2023 and 2024 benefitted from the guidance and advice of a team from [CTVC](#) and made short films about pressing social issues such as racism, sectarianism and the dangers of online bullying. Another session covered values-driven leadership delivered by a team from [Clare Social Leadership](#). The event also provides the opportunity for award holders to get to know each other and share experiences.

The **Community Action Placement** (CAP) creates similar opportunities to interact with peers with the added advantage of engaging in a project for social good. We were once more grateful to our long-term partners for their support and to our new partner, **Over the Wall**, who provided opportunities for three awards holders in their camps in Scotland and Staffordshire. The following reflection from the Director of Programmes at Over the Wall sums up the mutual benefits CAP can bring: ‘He was beloved by his campers. They selected him out of all their volunteers to receive their team festival challenge at the end of the week, and it was clear that he’d taken the time to get to know his group and make meaningful connections with them.’



Similar benefits were clearly recognised by the students themselves.

The following comment is from a young person whose caring responsibilities at home meant they were unable to attend a residential setting but who clearly learned valuable lessons from their non-residential placement with **Essex Boys and Girls Clubs**: ‘Being able to work within a real staff team with different roles has helped me acknowledge the vast variety of skills everyone in a team would have. Observing the main coordinator was inspiring and insightful as they were able to take on difficult situations well and showed me how to deal with them, especially towards children from certain age groups.’

In a series of online meetings with both groups of award holders, we explored further aspects of leadership. It also allowed us to engage with the class of 2023 and their parents/carers about the maintenance grants now offered as part of the award.

As the first beneficiaries of the revised scheme, we are looking forward to seeing how our support will help them as they progress to life after school

3. Encouraging Enterprise

Back in 2013, under the leadership of Chairman Joey Newton, the Foundation made a clear commitment to intensify its focus on social enterprise. Inspired by the entrepreneurial drive of Joey’s grandfather, our founder Lord Rank, the aim was to help organisations build resilience and long-term sustainability, ensuring lasting impact for the communities they cherish.

We made a strategic commitment to support social enterprises in all their forms and to be an ‘enterprising’ Foundation. We’ve often been the first funder of new or emerging ideas (place-based programmes and RankNet for example) or testing creative solutions to stubborn issues, such as Time to Shine and RAP.



This commitment remains strong and is evidenced more than 10 years on with the introduction of our own social enterprise; a social sector coworking space in London’s Shoreditch. Launching an enterprise has given us the opportunity to directly experience what social enterprise can be and in doing so, to create a space for our Network to work, connect and collaborate in style.

With support from the Network, we have introduced a diverse range of programmes to encourage enterprise in the social sector through grants to diversify income, repayable grants, and programmes that encourage entrepreneurial endeavour.

3.1. Profit for Good

Profit for Good increases enterprise in the social sector by helping participants generate sustainable income and supporting leaders of profit-for-good initiatives to be agile and confident.

The 2023 Profit for Good cohort remains engaged in their enterprise journey and have started to access year 2 and 3 grants, which are matched against traded income. One of the projects, Access Bikes, recently featured on BBC's The One Show and many others have reported increased levels of traded income. The 2023 cohort presented a seminar at the Rank Annual Conference in 2024, sharing their learning and enterprise journeys with the Network.

Due to budget reductions, Profit for Good did not run in 2024. Two programmes will be launched in 2025, one specifically for organisations based in Sunderland.

3.2. Pushing Boundaries

In 2023 we opened applications for a new leadership programme called **Pushing Boundaries**. This six-month programme was initiated and designed by a small group of experienced leaders from within the Network. They proposed a programme for emerging leaders, those who have secured a role within the social sector but are seeking opportunities to build their skills, confidence and leadership acumen.

We agreed to fund the pilot and offer administrative and leadership support. We received 33 applications, and 11 emerging leaders took part in January 2024.



Pushing Boundaries included one in-person 24 hour residential in Leeds and five digital sessions covering positivity and confidence, HR and performance, communication, delegation and feedback, fairness and commitment, decision making and responsibility, budgets and finance, and project planning.

What our participants said:

“The Pushing Boundaries programme content developed my leadership skillset, educating me around tools and processes I could use to be more effective in my role, and providing insight and perspective about the realities and experience of being a leader through input from people who had walked the walk.”

“Since completing the programme, I am approaching tasks I previously found challenging with ease, a new found confidence and with greater self-esteem.”

“I have formed a network of people who are at a similar stage in their career to me. We have learnt and grown together. I have found this an extremely open and nurturing environment where each person is valued and listened to. I have thoroughly benefitted from listening to and interacting with the speakers and the different topics.”

Following this successful pilot, we will run a second programme in 2025, again, led predominately by members of the Network

3.3. Repayable Grants Programme

In 2024, the Trustees approved four repayable grants for well-developed products and business plans.

One grant of £150,000 went to the children's charity **Over The Wall (OTW)**. OTW will use the grant to secure long-term accommodation for their highly impactful and inclusive holiday and activity camps, predominately for children with disabilities and complex health needs. OTW will repay the grant in one instalment by September 2029.

Three repayable grants totalling £63,840 went to organisations in Plymouth.

Stiltskin Arts and Theatre CIC received a repayable grant of £30,000 to purchase a big top tent to increase the capacity of their community plays from 80 to 200. Stiltskin began repaying their grant in September 2024 at £1,000 per month for thirty months.

Fotonow CIC received a repayable grant of £12,000 to upgrade photography equipment for their community focused workshops. Fotonow will begin to repay the grant in twenty instalments by February 2027.

Plymouth Scrapstore CIC received a repayable grant of £21,840 to support a creative outreach team to improve their workshop offer and engage the local community. Plymouth Scrapstore will begin to repay the grant in 36 instalments by February 2028.



4. Convening Conversations About Faith

Lord Rank was a committed Methodist who strongly believed in the power of media to educate, challenge and inspire. The Rank Foundation's subsidiary, CTVC, continues to build on his legacy by producing stories of faith, hope and community for diverse audiences, which are broadcast in the UK and across the world.

Against a landscape of global unrest, our fourth mission convening conversations about Christian faith is as vital as ever. In 2024, CTVC's faith-based content across TV, radio, podcast and digital platforms, produced more world view programming in a year than ever before:

- **74** pieces of Christian content (totaling over 40 hours)
- **61** pieces of World Faith, Moral and Ethical content (totaling over 25 hours)
- **28** programmes in production

4.1. Inclusive and Progressive Themes

2024 was CTVC's first full year of producing the BBC's flagship religious series Songs of Praise. Featuring inspirational Christian stories in over 50 communities across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, episodes reached a mass audience of nearly a million people each week.

Episodes focused on thought provoking and progressive themes including inclusive worship, LGBTQ+ communities, Christian activism, faith and the environment, fertility, adoption and parenting, faith and rehabilitation in prisons, Christian carers, faith and refuge, and faith and Dementia.

Programming provided comfort to those who needed it the most.

Audience comments included:

"We stumbled upon this little church on our stillborn daughter's anniversary. Such a beautiful peaceful place to be."

"I wanted to thank you so much for your episode of SoP related to inclusivity. My wife and I both thought it was outstanding. We have had experiences of judgment and pain related to our sexuality and relationship and this was such a powerful episode. Thank you."



Outside of Christian broadcasting, CTVC continued to produce content featuring world faiths including Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, humanism, atheism and agnosticism as well as programmes that have asked big questions including, should religious people always forgive?

Across platforms, CTVC content has generated healthy multi-faith conversations. In our Things Unseen podcast, Passover: When Your Enemy Falls, a practicing Muslim, Amir Suleman, talks with Rabbi Dov Cowan about the theological implications of the war in Gaza.

One listener commented:

“The programme doesn't shy away from difficult questions and answers but the palpable respect between these two is so heartwarming and inspiring. The respectful approach shows what a considered space can do.”

4.2. Keeping Faith and Its Impact Visible to Millions of People Around the World

To ensure stories of faith are meeting the audiences who need them the most, CTVC has undertaken considerable work to grow audiences and better understand the impact of its programming.



→ **'Songs of Praise' Series** **1M+ viewers eight times**

A clip from the Olympic Faith episode amassed over 2.2 million views on social media.

→ **'Pilgrimage' Series** **1.5M+ viewers per episode**

The Pilgrimage online campaign across X, Facebook and Instagram reached 5.9M views and 122K interactions

→ **'TrueTube' Education Platform** **3M+ views**

148.5K hours watched

200K+ subscribers

→ **'El Salvador's Missing Children' Radio** **23.5K+ views on X**

Distributed to 4.6M+ users in Central & Latin America

→ **Social Media Platforms (X, Facebook & Instagram)** **8K new followers**

850 days of watch time

110.3K interactions

1.88M reach (unique views)

This growth of the audience has given a deeper insight into the impact of CTVC's output and therefore an ability to better track conversation inspired by faith-based programming:

“*You* are my church family – and I thank you for being the place I can turn to for spiritual connection, music and Christian fellowship in this modern life. Thank you. Never stop broadcasting, please.”

Looking Forward

In 2026 we will conclude our current strategy period, a time when much has changed for the social sector, not least the challenges its leaders face. Despite the uncertainty of the funding context and the complexity of the social issues our Network members address, we face the future from a position of collective strength. Together we can address the consequences of inequality across the UK.

Our thriving Network provides the bedrock from which we provide opportunities for emerging social sector leaders, and we will continue to invest in our flagship programmes Time to Shine, Rank Aspire and the School Leadership Award. We will capitalise on our knowledge and connections created through a place-based approach, particularly in Plymouth and Sunderland, where funder partners work alongside us in supporting local communities. Together we take an enterprising approach through the Profit for Good programme and with distributed leadership through participatory grant-making programmes.

As a relational funder, Rank will continue to engage directly and involve Network members in our work, through the RankNet Leaders Action Group, the annual networking conference and the digital offer through the RankNet platform. Looking to the future, we will build on our strong relationship with the Network as the members help us to create a new strategy, fit for purpose and responsive to the social sector and its role.





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