

Leith Chooses meeting 13 March 2024

Present: Jade, Douglas, Abigail, Jack, Bruce (minutes), Susan (chair)

Apologies: Don, Sally, Tremaine

1 Evaluation event

This was attended by AUGB and Edinburgh Remakery representatives. Their feedback was very positive, including appreciation of points raised at the Community Conversation being implemented, and of the voting event being great for networking. Monty from the Police Box and Mike from YMCA also emailed some feedback. The following points and suggestions were made.

1.1 Application Process

- The process was smooth. Glad to see a slightly larger word count.
- The applicant info/support session was really helpful. It was a good way to spark ideas and think differently.

1.2 Preparing for the vote

- The information received in advance was helpful.
- Organisations should attend the in-person vote day to be eligible for any votes including online ones. It's unfair to the other organisations who put in a lot of work. Everyone should also attend the Awards evening.
- Action: LC to make it clear at the start of the process that attendance at the in-person vote day is a non optional part of the process.

1.3 Communication

- Emails are the main point of information for applicants throughout the process. The emails have included useful information and are timely.
- The support sessions with the Steering Group are really helpful.

1.4 Vote Day

- A great day. "we loved every minute of it".
- Good opportunity to speak with the other organisations, link up and find out what is happening in Leith.
- A stall-holder got a parking ticket
 - Action: LC to remind projects of parking restrictions on the day of the event the 2025 voting event. Information regarding parking was circulated via email multiple times before the event, however a last reminder on the day would be beneficial.

1.5 Interactive stalls

- Interactive elements to stalls work. Remakery found their interactive element a great way of engaging with voters and recommend having something that draws in voters to find out more. An info session on creating engaging stalls or how to set up a stall might be beneficial.
- Evaluation event attendees say these work. Hence
 - Action: LC to provide info/ideas on how to do this for the 2025 voting event
 - Action: this information to include how stalls can keep laptops charged

1.6 Social media

- Social media work by Cllrs Bandel and O'Neill and the *Edinburgh Reporter* was very much appreciated – projects used this in their own promotions. They found this really valuable throughout the voting process and could easily reshare video clips on their own social media channels to encourage votes.

1.7 Boost-project stalls

- These should be equidistant from the ballot box – AUGB noticed how they benefitted from being very near the ballot box.

1.8 Voting event timing

- The voting event should be at the start of the online voting period, e.g. if it's on Saturday 2025_02_01, then online voting should start that day or Monday 2025_02_03.
 - Action: LC to start thinking about the 2025 voting schedule, including any constraints on Jade, Tremaine and colleagues.

1.9 Circulation at voting event

- Voters did not need to visit all stalls.
- People were able to get into the voting hall(s) without registering – and could come into the main voting hall through the 'exit' door.
 - Action: LC to consider how to route voters so they register before they get into the voting hall(s).
 - This may mean getting all of the Community Centre (e.g. registration could be at the entrance.
 - Perhaps the main ballot box needs to be elsewhere.
 - Perhaps the stall-tables need to be in a different configuration.
 - Action: LC to plan the layout – including table locations – using an accurate floor-plan, once the number of stalls is known (presumably October/November 2024)

1.10 Single-use cups/recycling

- It may be that the Community Centre does not have recycling bins – this does not help LC's image.
- If there are funds, LC could give each voter and stall-person a branded, reusable mug. (1000 or more should cost around £1.70 each: <https://www.mugstore.co.uk/cambridge-mug-19309>)

1.11 Non-attendance

- There was very strong feeling that those who did not attend the voting day and/or the awards event should be disqualified.
 - Action: LC to put any such restrictions very clearly into the 2024-2025 guidance for applicants.

2 Getting more feedback

- Action: Jade to ask other projects for feedback, including those who did not win funding.
 - Action: if there are many responses, LC to help analyse them

3 2024 funded projects

- Jade has instructed CEC finance to pay 10 of the 13 winning projects.
 - She is currently processing the remaining 3. (Hermitage Park is behind because it decided to fund it after the results were calculated, because SHE Scotland has had to withdraw.)
 - It takes about 10 working days from instructing CEC finance to projects receiving their funds.
 - Jade will check with directly projects whether they have received their funds about 2 weeks after instructing CEC finance.
- Action: Bruce to update list of funded projects on LC website to note that SHE Scotland has withdrawn, so Hermitage Park has been offered (and gratefully accepted) part-funding.

4 Reports from 2023 funded projects

- It would be good publicity (and possibly help with evaluation for CEC) if good news from the projects funded in 2023 is publicised.
 - To avoid potential bias of the 2025 vote, such publicity should be complete before that voting cycle begins.
- Jade is about to resend these projects a report template. She will also request photos that LC can use in publicity. (She sent it along with the notice of award in 2023, but these emails may be long lost.)
 - Action: Jade to add these responses to a new Dropbox folder, then share that link with LC colleagues.

- Action: LC to pick out the good-news stories and suitable pictures.
- Action: LC to consider how to use social media to publicise these 'good news' stories.
- Action: LC to revisit idea of publishing the reports in full, for maximum transparency and good-news value.
- Action: if this is to happen, projects should be made aware of this in relevant documentation.

5 LC website

- Currently Sally pays for this. In case she ceases to do so, or it evaporates for any other reason, there was thought about putting the LC website material on the CEC website.
 - CEC website can only be manipulated by approved CEC staff, unless CEC makes an exception for the putative LC part of its website.
 - Action: jack to ascertain the content management system(s) underpinning CEC's website. (We believe it may be [JADU](#).)