


Organisation Name: The Turnaround Project	
Grant Details: Total Grant: £57,129 Amount funded to date: £57,129 Amount remaining: £0 Start date: 05/04/22 End date: 05/04/24 Date of Report: 15/04/24	
Grant Summary To strengthen Turnaround Project's support to move young adults into conventional employment by developing a specialised recruitment platform for Northern Ireland, developing relationships with employers and increasing our coaching capacity through a peer coaching training programme.	
Grant Performance Whilst this is a lengthy final report, I have resisted the temptation to edit this to something shorter as I am keen for Trustees to see the great work that Turnaround Project has done in an extremely challenging environment. Northern Ireland remains a geography where we don't receive a huge number of applications, and this is partly due to weak infrastructure and a voluntary sector that isn't as developed as other parts of the UK. There has also been significant investment through Peace initiatives and money from the EU, but this can be focused in specific areas and mean that some key issues can miss out. There has also been a political stalemate at Stormont, and this has had a huge impact both on the third sector but the criminal justice system specifically due to no shared vision, short term budgeting and a growing prison population where prisons are now at capacity. And Covid has also had a major impact. Despite all of this Turnaround Project have continued to deliver a strong and well managed project. They have not only managed to carry on but have grown their capacity too, developing new partnerships, increasing their opportunities and branching out into new areas such as their cycle workshop at Queen's University. Richard the CEO, Tara and Lauren at Turnaround are an impressive team who know the sector well and have significant links with high level decision makers and other charities and their leaders. They are at the forefront of pioneering new approaches to supporting reducing reoffending and are always looking for opportunities to work with others. We have introduced them to St Columbs Park House, who we fund in Derry, to discuss formal ways of working together and bringing what both organisations do to each other's work. The request to reallocate the underspend from the grant has been agreed.	

Organisation name		
The Turnaround Project		
Grant start date	Grant reference (see grant letter)	
05/04/2022	2021-10-YO40	
Young offenders strategy overall goal		
<i>Reoffending rates for young people are reduced</i>		
Young offenders strategy outcomes		
<i>Young offenders are supported to secure stable employment</i>		
1. What is the first expected key achievement in year 2 of your grant?		
<p>We want to maximise our engagement with employers creating an employers forum to generate shared learning and HR policy change in respect of employing people who have prior convictions, as well as building relationships for potential job brokering service and follow-on job opportunities for our transitional employees.</p>		
Indicators for this achievement (these should be a mix of outputs and other changes that you can demonstrate and that link to the expected key achievement named above)	Target date	Progress towards these indicators
1a. Develop relationships and commitment from at least 2 other sectoral organisations and 5 employers for an employer forum.		<p>The Stakeholder Engagement Lead consulted with a person who had been instrumental in setting up the New Futures Network in England that supports the recruitment and retention of people who have been through the justice system in employment in June 23. Following this meeting it was decided that an “innovation event” would be planned and held by Turnaround to gauge employer interest and engagement.</p> <p>Turnaround had existing partnerships with Idverde and Alpha Housing through contractual relationships, and with Allen & Overy through pro-bono support and engagement. Relationships were built with the Director of Rehabilitation at Iceland Foods, the CEO of Greggs plc and Version 1 (IT company). After these companies had indicated their support and likely attendance, a process of event planning began including working with Version 1 who agreed to host the initial event and pay for travel and accommodation and</p>

		Allen & Overy whose design team staff produced leaflets and social media graphics.
2. What is the second expected key achievement in year 2 of your grant?		
Provide facilitation of an Employer Forum to increase access to employment for those with a criminal record.		
Indicators for this achievement (these should be a mix of outputs and other changes that you can demonstrate and that link to the expected key achievement named above)	Target date	Progress towards these indicators
2a.	Set up a forum to agree a process for a sector wide job matching process.	The Turnaround Project held the first Employers Engagement Event on Thursday 21 March 2024. The Event was intended as an opportunity to explore employers' experiences of employing (or not) people who have served sentences in prison or the community, to discover what may encourage or assist employers to employ more people from that cohort, and the potential challenges employers have experienced or anticipate as a result of employing people with convictions.
2b.	Facilitate forum to agree a brand to recognise 'second chance' friendly employers/job opportunities	It was well attended, with the following companies amongst the attendees; Allen & Overy, Alexander Mann Solutions, Openreach Network, Fujitsu, Business in the community, Fabritec Steel, Morrow Contracts, Fabritec Steel, Herbert Smith Freehills, Kainos, Alpha Housing NI, Outsidein, Hays Consulting, Iceland, Greggs, and Idverde.
2c.	Formalise arrangement with existing employer contacts for how the 'second chance' friendly brand could be used for employee/job opportunities.	The employers who attended had a range of experiences, some had never employed anyone who had been through the justice system and others had tried to employ someone but encountered issues of attendance, travel to and from work etc. Some employers noted that the low educational attainment levels of many people who have

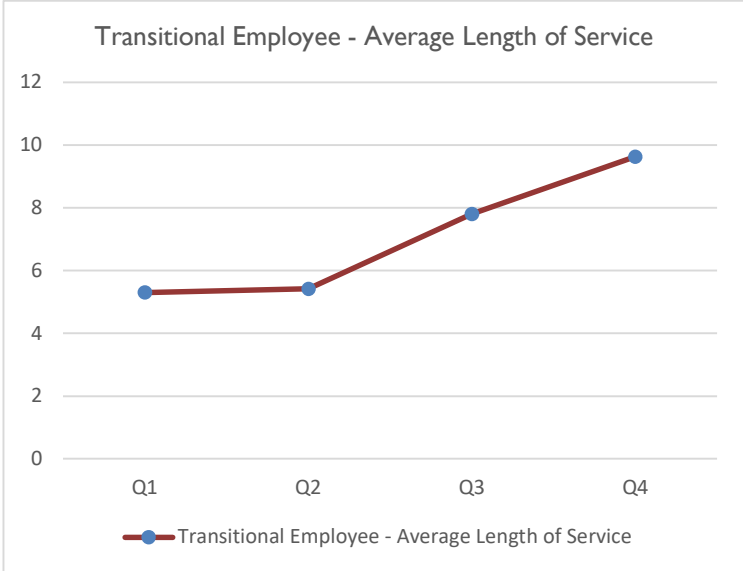
2d.	Secure agreement of at least 5 (reduced from 10) mainstream employers in Northern Ireland to being part of the programme	<p>served sentences potentially provided skills barriers to employment.</p> <p>Six employers have (so far) committed to joining an ongoing forum in the future; Fabrictec Steel, Idverde, Version 1, Herbert Smith Freehills, Hays Consulting and Fujitsu.</p> <p>To continue this engagement further, a series of events is planned in May 24, alongside the founder of US-based organisation Homeboy Industries, the largest gang rehabilitation organisation in the world. One of these events will be working towards further establishment of an ongoing employers' forum.</p> <p>We have identified key opportunities for Turnaround to make a positive impact for people leaving the justice system, those that work with Turnaround, and those who do not – for example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Helping employers on-board, induct and include those who have convictions into their workforce. 2. The benefits of promoting the inclusion of those who have convictions as part of organisations' equality, diversity and inclusion agenda. 3. Cross-sector sharing and knowledge exchange by way of working-groups and open dialogue to ensure ongoing learning and process improvement.
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3. What is the third expected key achievement in year 2 of your grant?

Identify follow-on job opportunities for our transitional employees.

Indicators for this achievement (these should be a mix of outputs and other changes that you can demonstrate and that link to the expected key achievement named above)	Target date	Progress towards these indicators

<p>3a.</p>	<p>Increase the availability of transitional employment opportunities, 12 in Yr 1 and 14 in Yr 2 due to moving existing individuals on.</p>	<p>In 2022-23 we received 85 referrals and in 2023-24 we received 97 referrals showing we had increased our reach. Referrals into the Turnaround Project have come from statutory organisations like the Prison Service, the Probation Board and community and voluntary organisations. Over the two years, 31 referrals were self-referral or TE referrals.</p> <div data-bbox="592 598 1323 1018" data-label="Figure"> <table border="1"> <caption>No. Referrals by Year</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>No. Referrals</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2019-2020</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020-2021</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021-2022</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2022-2023</td> <td>85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023-2024</td> <td>97</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p>We increased the number of transitional opportunities available during in both years. In 2022-23, 33 people were on our payroll as transitional employees, and in 2023-24 39 people were on our payroll as transitional employees.</p> <p>In the 2022-23 year 8,377 hours of employment were taken up by transitional employees. We increased this in the 2023-24 year by 13%, with transitional employees taking up 9,488 hours of employment. Over the two years, this takes us to over 17865 hours of transitional employment offered to people leaving the justice system.</p>	Year	No. Referrals	2019-2020	8	2020-2021	25	2021-2022	40	2022-2023	85	2023-2024	97
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<p>3b.</p>	<p>At least 6 (reduced target from 8) of the individuals recruited that we will provide 12 months transitional employment will</p>	<p>In 2022-23, six of the 33 people were moved into conventional employment. In 2023-24 we moved four people into conventional employment and one person was moved into education.</p> <p>It should be noted however that nine people, who were recruited as transitional employees in the 2023-24 year, are</p>												

	<p>be moved into conventional employment.</p>	<p>still currently with us, many of whom we expect to be able to support gaining conventional employment. We recruit transitional employees on a rolling, ongoing basis throughout the year, therefore some people may join us at the beginning of the year and some towards the end, this means that some people who join us mid-year are unlikely to be ready/being supported into conventional employment until the following year.</p>																						
<p>3c.</p>	<p>Retaining 70% of recruits in transitional employment</p>	<p>We have been slowly improving our retention rate, and average length of employment, for transitional employees in 2023-24. At the start of the year the average length of service was just shy of 6 months, we have now improved this to 9.6 months.</p> <div data-bbox="591 825 1330 1392">  <table border="1"> <caption>Transitional Employee - Average Length of Service</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Average Length of Service (Months)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q1</td> <td>5.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2</td> <td>5.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3</td> <td>7.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4</td> <td>9.6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p>We have also improved our data collection during the year to track the reasons why people leave their transitional employment.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="646 1648 1312 1875"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2022-2023</th> <th>2023-2024</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Outcomes</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>** ON WAITING LIST</td> <td></td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>*** PROCESSING REFERRAL</td> <td></td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Average Length of Service (Months)	Q1	5.3	Q2	5.5	Q3	7.8	Q4	9.6		2022-2023	2023-2024	Outcomes			** ON WAITING LIST		1	*** PROCESSING REFERRAL		5
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		*STILL WITH TP	3	9
		CONVENTIONAL EMPLOYMENT	6	4
		DON'T KNOW	0	1
		EDUCATION		1
		LEFT - ADDICTION	2	1
		LEFT - LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES DIFFICULT	1	2
		LEFT - MENTAL HEALTH	6	2
		LEFT - NOT PROGRESSING	2	1
		LEFT - PHYS HEALTH		2
		NOT SUITABLE / DRUGS	5	2
		RECALLED TO PRISON	1	1
		REFERRED TO ANOTHER SERVICE		1
		REOFFENDED		1
		TRAVEL ISSUE		1
		<p>Addiction issues, mental health and difficulties with life circumstances were the most common reasons why people leave Turnaround. We have observed however, that some TEs who left us have thereafter returned to Turnaround asking to restart. We did not originally anticipate this as a positive outcome, however upon reflection we do consider this as one measure of success – people’s journeys from the justice system may not be linear, but engaging again with us shows that people believe that the impact that Turnaround has had on their lives is positive.</p>		
3d.	Retaining 70% in conventional employment	Of the people who were moved into conventional employment, at present 100% are still working in the jobs they attained.		
<p>4. Optional – please detail any additional expected achievements you would like us to know about that are key to the success of your project</p>				
<p><u>Other achievements:</u></p>				

The Turnaround Project is committed to co-design and co-production, recognising the benefits of lived experience through all layers of the organisation. One of the ways that we strengthen the lived-experience and knowledge within Turnaround is by offering opportunities to transitional employees.

Over the course of your funding, we have encouraged transitional employees to apply for permanent roles with the Turnaround Project whenever job opportunities have become available. Running a normal recruitment process, with CV, cover letter and interview required, three transitional employees who felt they met the job specification and criteria applied for permanent posts, they were supported where required by the Coach (who was not involved in the recruitment process). All three were successfully recruited into the Turnaround Project, two as Supervisor's Assistants and one as a Crew Supervisor. Not only has this strengthened our operations and provided necessary lived experience and knowledge within Turnaround, but the desire of transitional employees (current and former) to join the organisation on a permanent basis, we believe, is proof that we are making a positive difference to those we support. Our permanent staff team is now 38% lived-experience.

Of those who have sustained transitional employment with us for 12 months, none have reoffended.

Newsletter

As a result of our engagement with many different stakeholders, we have now begun to circulate a Stakeholder newsletter every two months. This newsletter allows us to update and reach our wider variety of employers, community and statutory stakeholders. Our overall aim, through greater and wider engagement, is to be able to encourage more referrals for people for whom a transitional employment opportunity will help them turn around their futures and leave the justice system behind.

Strategic Plan

As a result of improved data collection, greater participation and engagement (and through pro-bono consultancy support from Cranfield Trust and Allen & Overy for design support) we have gone through a process of evaluating Turnaround's activities and impact. Based on this we have developed a strategic plan for the next three years with three different strands of activity:

- o Developing People – Our coaching and people-based support within the Turnaround Project will be lived-experience, trauma, gender and neurodiversity informed, will expand beyond our transitional employees, to help people who do not

avail of a transitional employment opportunity but have experience of the justice system and need help to forge alternative futures for themselves.

- o Enabling Employment – Through direct provision of transitional employment, training and support, as well as through connections with employers, we will continue to break down barriers to employment and build upon our work to meet the need for employment, as the upmost self-identified need for people leaving the justice system.
- o Engagement & Advocacy – With a focus on society turning its face towards people leaving the justice system, and by ensuring those with lived experience are supported and offered opportunities to share their stories, experiences, knowledge and skills, we will improve outcomes, and help co-create new futures, for people leaving the justice system.
- We've reviewed our organisational needs, and our organisational structure, to support activity and outcomes being delivered in line with our strategic plan and to move closer to operational and financial sustainability.

Amplifying agency and strengths of people with lived-experience

- 205 one-to-one strengths-based coaching sessions have been provided to transitional employees during the year.
- 10 transitional employees were supported to create or update their CVs.
- We have begun work to redevelop our coaching model with a greater focus on employment and personal development.
- Coaching support this year has helped people leaving the justice system with work skills, support with family/relationships, support with mental health, support accessing and understanding benefits and support with housing. The way in which people have been supported has included:
 - o legal/offending issues
 - o Addiction
 - o Liaising with benefits and other statutory offices
 - o Housing support and liaison with housing teams
 - o Communication with social workers and family members
 - o Personal Budgeting
 - o CVs
 - o Help with applying for jobs and training
 - o Guidance on workplace expectations and procedures
 - o Generalist support and advice, for example encouraging attendance to counselling, harm reduction advice, crisis support and help with coping mechanisms.
- We worked with an Ulster University Master's student to research Turnaround's readiness and capacity for co-production; "Critically evaluating The Turnaround Project's readiness for Co-Production through the lens of an organisational Co-Production and Involvement self-audit tool". This study revealed that Turnaround was actively encouraging and supporting co-production through informal methods, but that there existed organisational size-based barriers to enhancing this further. As a result of learning from the study, Turnaround is now working to strengthen and introduce more formal methods of involving people with lived experience at all levels of the

organisation, conscious of the need to maintain non-traditional ways of engagement rather than more traditional methods (focus-groups etc), in order to ensure barriers to engagement are reduced.

- We engaged with Kith and Kin, Advice NI, Relate, Housing Rights and other external agencies to tailor and deliver financial management, welfare advice as well as health and housing services and advice to people with lived experience in a shared space.

- We have done, or have planned, projects to engage people with lived experience of prison, probation and serving community sentences to inform statutory agencies/public policy including:

- o Housing programme alongside Housing Rights to share experiences of housing.

- o Applied for and was offered £1500 funding from Community Health Development Agency to bring together Pharmacists with local healthcare knowledge and people with lived experience to discuss access and delivery of healthcare.

BUILDING SHARED, EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES

- We ran a Breakfast club, which provided a warm meal for our transitional employees and an opportunity to socialise and share thoughts and opinions in the mornings before work.

- We have, or are working on events which aim to addressing community barriers to integration and rehabilitation:

- o In October 23 Turnaround organised the Great Law Quiz with over 100 guests from top NI legal firms and current law students to highlight the experiences of those who have served sentences as well as

- o Through our wider engagement, Turnaround has made links with Homeboy Industries, the largest gang rehabilitation and re-entry program in the world who, for over 30 years, have been a beacon of hope in Los Angeles to provide training and support to formerly gang-involved and previously incarcerated people. An event is planned in early 2024-2025 year between Turnaround and Homeboy Industries, with founder, Father Greg Boyle attending, funded through Department for Economy.

- We have engaged with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Social Enterprise, and head of their Assets teams to discuss how social value contracts may be written to support more social outcomes.

- Through our Lived Experience Series podcast, we have raised the voices of people with experiences of the justice system, addiction and homelessness, over 60 episodes, spanning a listener base in across the UK and Ireland, North America, Australia and Europe, reaching Spotify's Top 5 podcast rating. The listener average is 2413 per episode and to date 1943 minutes of guest contributions have been shared.

- We have designed and have agreed to deliver a lived experience leadership programme, co-designed by people with lived experience and delivered in partnership with statutory and voluntary sector partners across Ireland including Irish Probation and PACE.

Other

- Signed up for new system for social Value measurement via Social Value Engine
- Shortlisted for working in Partnership Award with All Ireland Housing Association (results on 14th of March 2024)
- A transitional employee was supported by Turnaround staff to present his artwork to the Lord Mayor of Belfast.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

THE NORTHERN IRELAND JUSTICE SYSTEM

Since Covid there have been significant challenges associated with connecting with people, who are serving sentences in prison, prior to release.

The prison system in Northern Ireland is currently experiencing huge pressures, with the prison population rising – prisons are likely to be at maximum capacity. Some of the difficulties in staffing have meant that the prisons have struggled to facilitate ‘inside the gate’ engagement from organisations like Turnaround. In addition, the impact of ongoing Covid-induced delays, within the justice and courts system, have meant that many who have been sentenced to a prison term, will have already served a significant amount of their sentence (on remand) by the time they are sentenced in court. ‘Short sentence’ prisoners, often have little or no engagement with the Prisoner Development Units, therefore opportunities for intervention and support are limited and a significant proportion of the prison/offending population is being unsupported.

We know that being able to make connections before people are released is crucial. From talking to our current and former transitional employees, the sense of hopelessness and anxiety associated with ‘wondering what I’ll do next’ is significant, and something that has been experienced by the majority of people we support. The reassurance that a transitional employment opportunity, and a connection with Turnaround prior to release, could provide has the potential to not only create positive outcomes for individuals in respect of employment, but also mental health and stability.

We are seeking to further develop our employment pathway to support people 'behind the gate' 'through-the-gate' and beyond.

POLITICAL & ECONOMIC

The political Northern Ireland context, namely the ongoing suspension of the Executive, placed significant pressure on the community and voluntary sector as a whole. Coupled with the increased competition for funding, due to the loss of the European Social Fund post-Brexit, Turnaround has struggled to secure grant funds from a more competitive, and decreased funding pool.

In addition, the absence of Ministers, has meant that key funds for the Northern Ireland charity and voluntary sector have not been released. This has added more pressure onto an already squeezed sector. We have responded by trying to build in financial resilience to our primary-purpose trading enterprises. However, cost-of-living based rises in costs have had a significant impact on our budgets. As our beneficiaries are employed, we have seen a significant rise in costs of employment due to the increase in the National Minimum and Living Wage. The further rises in wages that are expected for 2024-2025 will continue to significantly stretch our financial resources. Our operating model of transitional employment is such, that as we provide more employment opportunities for beneficiaries, this increases direct costs. We know however, that having "real jobs, in real enterprises" is what those whom we support say they need most.

We continue to focus on becoming more efficient and effective as a charity, and within our enterprises. Outwork particularly is beginning to see the benefits of scale, having grown from one part-time supervisor working out of a van with a couple of transitional employees, to almost four vans being deployed throughout most of the year.

Striving to keep core costs low, (conscious that we want the majority of our funds and delivery to be focussed on those activities that generate direct outcomes for the individuals we support) we have struggled at times with capacity and ability to juggle competing priorities in difficult financial circumstances.

ORGANISATIONAL

As we grow as an organisation, we have implemented improved human resources policies and systems, had a substantial review of our financial policies procedures and systems for better financial reporting, scrutiny and accountability. Our organisational structure has been reviewed, and changes to our internal staff reporting and management are due to be implemented at the start of the new financial year.

To improve governance and operation systems across the charity generally, we have:

- Reviewed 18 existing organisational policies.

- Put in place 14 new policies across the areas of health and safety, fire safety, recruitment and equality and diversity.
- Improved safeguarding policies and procedures, and adult safeguarding culture across the organisation.
- Designed and implemented online system for tracking transitional employee attendance for HR and payroll purposes as well as for producing output data for impact measurement.
- Introduced an online system of job tracking replacing paper systems.
- Put in place online IT file storage system, improving IT systems and processed for greater data security as well as earning the organisation Cyber Essentials certificate of assurance.
- Reviewed our coaching data collection system and implemented temporary system of referral tracking and monitoring.
- Introduced operational reports for submission to the Board, making financial and operational recommendations to the Director and the Board to increase organisational stability and performance.
- Worked with pro-bono external consultants to process map existing and new Turnaround operational processes.
- Improved transitional employee recruitment process and coaching manual, updating processes (coaching manual being drafted).
- Improved recruitment and induction process for permanent staff.

Turnaround continues to seek to improve and grow as an organisation, not only in terms of size but also in terms of capacity.

Grateful request for profile of underspend:

Due to the requested part-time working hours of Stakeholder Engagement Officer, we have currently an underspend of £4121.05. We request that you might consider that we may reprofile the underspend of Stakeholder Engagement Officer salary costs to salary costs for our Lived-experience Crew Supervisor, recruited from the transitional employment pool into permanent staff.

As the employer's forum has just began to get underway, we have not yet updated the website platform to show the work on the employers' forum, we did however utilise some towards our website costs in anticipation of this. We will continue to develop this further in subsequent years. As a result of the underspend against the website, would you please consider whether you may allow us to allocate the remaining £748 against core costs?

5. Budget (please complete the predicted column prior to the assessment visit)			
Predicted		Actual (to be completed at end of year 2)	
Director	£5151.78	Director	£5151.78
Coach	£13127.39	Coach	£13127.49
Stakeholder Engagement officer	£11994	Stakeholder Engagement Officer	£7822.95
Website	£1000	Website	£252
			£
	£		£
	£		£
	£		£
Contribution to Overhead	£2717.09	Contribution to Overhead	£2717.09
TOTAL	33,990.26		£29071.31