A Feasibility Study to Explore the Potential for Participatory Grantmaking (PGM) in North Yorkshire

'Participation teaches everyone that people are worthwhile, and they matter. Who makes the decisions is really important[1].'

Contents

<u>Abbreviations used in this report</u>

DDM: Devolved Decision Making

PDM: Participatory Decision Making

PGM: Participatory Grantmaking

PRA: Participatory Resource Allocation

PWLE: People With Lived Experience

UKSPF: United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund

This report is complemented by 'companion' presentation slide decks and deep dive case studies created during the feasibility study which contain more detailed insights and quotations from stakeholders that contributed to the primary research - available on request from Marie-Ann Jackson, Head of Localities, North Yorkshire Council.

1.0   Introduction

This study provides recommendations for Participatory Grantmaking (PGM) in North Yorkshire. It describes current PGM activity and scope and considers whether UK Shared Prosperity (UKSP) Fund awards of community grants could function as experimental participatory grants in at least one location (possibly multiple) in North Yorkshire where the pre-conditions are assessed to be appropriate.

Alignment with the UK Shared prosperity Fund

This project supports the 'Community & Place' strand of North Yorkshire UKSP Prospectus and its priority to tackle rurality and inequality. More specifically the project aligns with strategic programme 1.1: Building Capacity in our People and Places and 1.2 Generating New Ideas for Community Regeneration. Activity 1.1c states an intention for community grants that target identified priority groups, areas and issues focusing support on:

- Local social action projects involving volunteers
- Activities and events to promote community engagement
- Piloting of localised approaches to issues including fuel poverty, food poverty, digital poverty, climate change and accessibility issues.

This study has been conducted with these strategic programmes in mind.

2.0   Methodology

Phase 1: Secondary research to support an assessment of PGM efficacy.

Phase 2: One-to-one interviews with stakeholders with experience of PGM in the UK to understand PGM merits, drawbacks, outcomes, pre-conditions and enablers of its effectiveness.

Phase 3: PGM 'learning together' workshop (in Scarborough) to identify learning lessons amongst a mixed group of people with lived experience involved in PGM and / or wider decision making practice, PGM facilitators, Foundations and Local Authority officers.

40 individuals have generously contributed to this study in and outside of North Yorkshire (see appendices).

The study has also benefited from actively learning from the 'live' community of people involved or interest in PGM as working practice using the dedicated slack channel: pgmcommunity.slack.com.

3.0   How this report is structured

Chapter 1: The rationale for this PGM feasibility study

Chapter 2: PGM definition and associated terminology

Chapter 3: Desk research findings

Chapter 4: PGM models and processes

Chapter 5: Situational analysis of PGM in North Yorkshire

Chapter 6: Primary research findings including learning lessons

Chapter 7: Conclusions

Chapter 8: Recommendations.

4.0   Chapter 1: The rationale for this PGM feasibility study

The North Yorkshire Shared Prosperity Prospectus makes a commitment (section 1.1c) to deliver community grants. Conversations with the Council's Stronger Communities Team in early 2023 identified an opportunity to explore the feasibility of orienting these community grants to be more participatory in their design. This would be part of move towards creating more community empowerment and building capacity, skills and confidence for residents to be more involved in deciding what could make a difference to their lives locally. However, it is currently unknown:

Whether PGM is universally defined?
How many PGM models there are?
PGM efficacy compared to any best practice that might be identified nationally or any evaluations?
What that PGM activity looks like in practice – the mechanics and processes involved with PGM?
Where PGM is happening – which localities, why and how long it has taken for it to be established, what the drivers were for trying PGM in the first place?
How much PGM is happening in North Yorkshire?
The pre-conditions that need to be in place for an effective PGM model including consideration of the lead time and resourcing required
What criteria one might need to consider before opting for a PGM approach compared to alternative community grant options available?
The different scales of grant typically associated with a PGM approach and how that compares to existing community grants distributed across North Yorkshire?

Meantime, there is increasing recognition at a national level that to shift (cede and share) power from traditional authority structures and commissioners to communities, new types of relationship and mechanisms are required. Participatory grantmaking may be one such mechanism. PGM is not just one model, rather it is an umbrella term comprising multiple possible approaches but has a common ambition to cede grantmaking power to affected community members and constituencies. **In practice, it means placing affected communities at the centre of grantmaking by giving them the power to decide who and what to fund.**

There is divergence in opinion it would seem in national debates about the extent to which PGM shifts power, as opposed to simply promoting an open and participatory process. North Yorkshire Council has committed to an increase in community empowerment as part of its Local Government Reorganisation. Thus it seems an opportune moment to explore mechanisms that could promote the conditions for such improved empowerment.
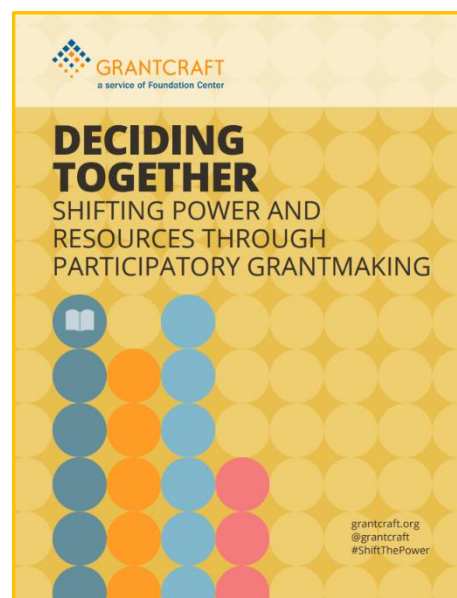
5.0   Chapter 2: Terminology

5.1   Definition

'There is no formal definition for participatory grantmaking, but there are agreed-upon tenets that distinguish this approach[2].'

'Although there is no formal definition, practitioners doing this work agree that PGM emphasises "nothing about us without us" and shifts power in grantmaking decisions from foundation staff to the people most affected by the issues. Reflecting on the above, this guide[3] will use the following definition:

'Participatory grantmaking cedes decision making power about funding—including the strategy and criteria behind those decisions—to the very communities that funders aim to serve.'

The literature contains variations of the most widely applied definition PGM seen above:

Definition

Adapted from Gibson (2018)

Participatory grantmaking is the involvement of non-grantmakers in decision-making about funding intended for their sectors or communities.

Source: 'Participatory Grantmaking: Building the Evidence' for Paul Ramsay Foundation authored by the Centre for Evidence and Implementation, May 2023.

PGM is an approach to funding decisions and strategies that emphasises a 'nothing about us without us' approach.

It aims to shift power in grant making decisions from foundation staff to the people most affected by social issues.

Source: Hannah Peterson, regarded as a leading light in the PGM field. This definition is from a learning presentation Hannah shared during her time at The National Lottery Community Fund resulting from her Winston Churchill Fellowship focused on: 'Participatory Grantmaking'.

'Participatory grantmaking is the process of shifting decision making power over grantmaking to the very communities most affected by the grants. It's a structural fix to the broken power dynamics in traditional funding - a way to change philanthropy from closed, opaque, and expert-driven to open, transparent, and community-driven.[4]"
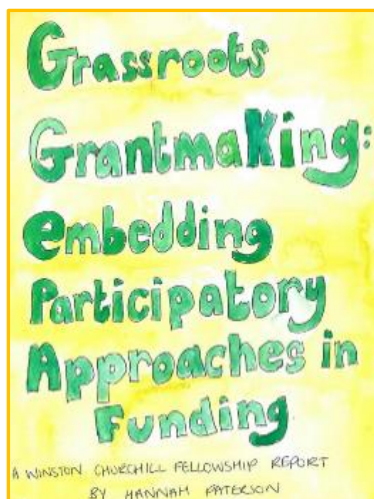
There is also associated terminology that is often referenced in the literature. Some of this is helpfully explained and distinguished in '*Participatory Grantmaking: Has its time come?*' authored by leading PGM and philanthropy expert, Cynthia Gibson[5][6] (right) and Hannah Peterson's published PGM Fellowship report (left). PGM is different to – but shares the characteristics of being participatory in its nature to participatory budgeting, to participatory philanthropy, participatory resource allocation, participatory decision making and devolved decision making.
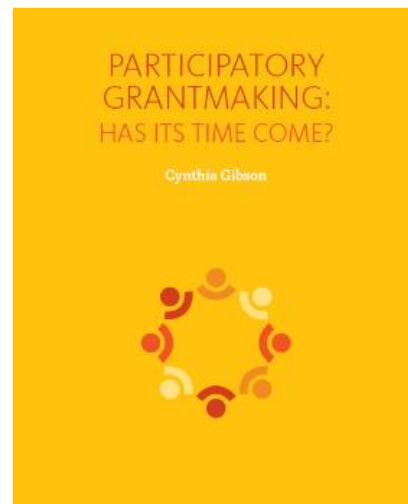
Participatory Grantmaking or Participatory Budgeting?

Community Votes

In Scotland and Northern Ireland, the concept of Participatory Budgeting has really taken off and in Scotland 1% of each local authority budget needs to be decided through participatory decision making. Participatory budgeting and participatory grantmaking are often used interchangeably. I think it's important to point out that there is a difference between these two things and explain what that is.

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is an innovative process which enables residents of a community to have direct decision-making powers over the allocation of public resources in their communities.

PB allows local authorities and local representatives to engage with communities and encourages civic and democratic involvement. There are some PB approaches that engage the community in identifying how budgets are spent e.g. being able to vote on the most important areas of work for local communities or feed in how a community member would split up a council budget.

Other PB approaches give over money to the community for them to decide directly how it is spent. This is most often facilitated through a community vote event.

WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY PHILANTHROPY AND IS IT DIFFERENT FROM PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING?

The term participatory philanthropy covers a wide range of institutional and individual activities such as incorporating grantee feedback into grant guidelines and strategy development, inviting non-grantmakers to sit on foundation boards, crowdfunding, and giving circles.

Participatory grantmaking narrows the focus to how grant decisions are made and by/for whom. Some see participatory grantmaking as one of many types of participatory philanthropy. Others think it is distinctive because it moves decision-making about money—which many see as the epitome of power—to the people most affected by the issues donors are trying to address. This is a monumental shift from how philanthropy traditionally has allocated funds—a disruption that may explain why participatory grantmaking is still relatively rare, particularly when compared to other forms of participatory philanthropy.

...AND WHAT ABOUT COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY?

Yet another grantmaking strategy that reflects bottom-up solutions is community philanthropy. This is when communities mobilize capital of various kinds (financial, civic, social, human, political, and intellectual) toward the goal of improving residents' lives over the long term. As Barry Knight notes, community philanthropy elevates the more intuitive and centuries-old notion that "local people helping each other, by sharing resources for the common good, is a naturally occurring asset found in all communities, and encouraged by all major religions and institutions." Key components are: building and deploying local assets (financial and otherwise); developing capacity for long-term leadership, infrastructure, relationships, and knowledge; and strengthening community trust and social capital through "homegrown governance and transparent funding decisions."

SOME DEFINITIONS

Participants—People taking part in a participatory grantmaking process who aren't paid foundation staff or donors. Sometimes, the word "peer" is used.

Grantmakers/Funders—Traditionally, the paid staff of foundations or other philanthropic associations. Participatory grantmaking, however, sees all participants as grantmakers/funders. Donors are the financial benefactors.

Experts—Traditionally, those who have deep knowledge about an issue and formal credentials; participatory grantmaking expands this definition to include people with lived experience as experts on issues affecting them.

Source: *Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking* (New York: Candid, 2018).

Other helpful definitions are provided in this resource: Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking:

PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING APPROACHES ENGAGE PEERS IN . . .

- Identifying funding priorities
- Conducting issue/environmental scans of issues, communities, etc.
- Designing funding strategies
- Creating funding criteria
- Reviewing proposals
- Making site visits
- Designing and implementing evaluations (including stipulating outcome/impact metrics)
- Supporting intermediaries that use a participatory grantmaking approach
- Deciding on/making grants

PGM is more than a process. It's a principle, an ethos, a belief, a set of values and a mechanism too.

Desk research converges on the idea that PGM should be regarded as an **ethos *or principle* AND a process** as this illustration from Hannah Peterson's publication demonstrates >>>.

'In contrast to traditional philanthropic approaches, PGM is purported to increase democratic and equitable decision making in grant allocation through the involvement of communities that grant makers aim to benefit (Husted et al., 2021). PGM, which "involves non-grant makers in funding decision processes" has at its core the principle of ceding decision making on resource allocation to non-grantmakers (Hauger, 2022). These may include individual community members or organisational representatives.[7]'

'Participatory grantmaking is becoming increasingly popular but is associated with definitional challenges.

Its value is around both increased effectiveness and a belief that it is 'just' as a **mechanism** and will, in and of itself, assist with power sharing and shifting. There are some (well documented) challenges associated with it. There is broad agreement on what PGM implies: beneficiaries setting the agenda and making decisions about funding. It's where the people who are beneficiaries or going to be beneficiaries are charged with the core enquiry as to whether applications constitute a viable approach within the contextual and cultural priorities that they are aware of because they are living it. PGM is involving the beneficiaries (or potential beneficiaries) in the **core enquiry** around what is needed, and what should be funded.[8]'
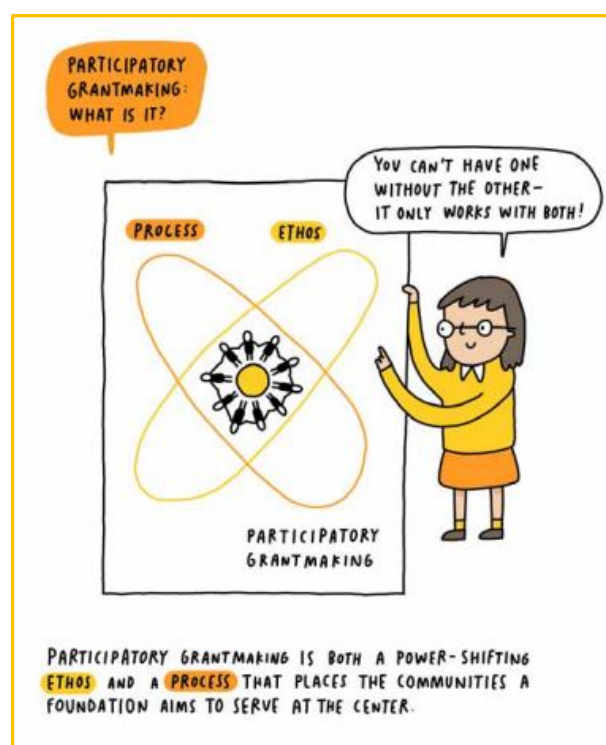
'Participatory grantmakers do not only acknowledge and talk about power; they break down barriers that keep people powerless through an approach that realigns incentives, cedes control, and upends entrenched hierarchies around funding decisions. To practitioners, participatory grantmaking isn't a tactic or a one-off strategy; it is a power-shifting **ethos** that cuts across every aspect of the institution's activities, policies, programs, and behaviors[9].'

'The core **principle** of participatory grantmaking is compelling: that philanthropic decision making should centre on community needs. It also recognises the value and importance of listening to a diversity of voices. This fundamentally relies on bringing into decision making the perspectives of those with lived experience and lived expertise[10].'

'The value of pursuing, funding or adopting participatory grantmaking practices boils down to two strong **beliefs**: (1) That it will result in more effective grantmaking, aligned to what is needed, because communities themselves are most likely to make the decisions that work for them[11] (2) That it will result in increased justice, fairness and power both at an individual and systemic level. As one article put it: "A just and equal world is not possible if other people make decisions about our lives[12]".

'There are different definitions of what PGM is and even within Camden Giving it is not a fixed and static process, more a set of **values**. Camden Giving's PGM processes are rooted in values – **flexibility, respect, justice and evolution[13]** - and in many ways the values are more important than the practicalities. For us, PGM means that the people who we aim to benefit are participating in the decisions about how grants are awarded. At Camden Giving we recruit, train and pay people with lived experience of one or more local issues (such as poverty), and they decide how a pot of funding should be spent to overcome those issues. We refer to these people as Community Panellists[14]'.

5.2   How long has PGM been a field of practice?

The desk research is divergent.

'The Funding Exchange, founded in 1979, is often seen as initiating PGM within modern philanthropy. The group, founded by young progressive activists with inherited wealth, called for "change, not charity." Their model of "activist-advised grantmaking" was used by 16 organizations across the USA, many of which remain active today. 'Although many PGM practitioners were connected before, it wasn't until 2020 when Hannah Paterson, as part of her research on PGM, began convening practitioners monthly. This monthly gathering turned into the Participatory Grantmakers Community, which now has over 600 members from around the world.[15]'

'Participatory Grantmaking (PGM) has been around for 30 years but gained significant momentum in recent times. It has become a focus of interest and study[16].'

'One of the first attempts by a national foundation to undertake a national participatory grantmaking initiative was in 2007, when the Case Foundation created and launched Make it Your Own (MIYO), a grants programme aimed at supporting and lifting up examples of "citizen-centered civic engagement." The foundation invited the public to participate in every step of the grantmaking process—including setting grant guidelines, serving as proposal reviewers, and voting on which proposals should receive grants. Proposals for the programme were submitted by thousands of people across the country seeking to improve their communities.'

For a more detailed history, linked to the development of social change philanthropy, please see Participatory Grantmaking, Has its Time Come? Cynthia Gibson, page 12. Alternatively, please visit the PGM Slack Channel / Community of Practice 'Reading Room' **pgmcommunity.slack.com**

6.0   Chapter 3: Desk research findings

Efficacy studies relating to PGM are scarce, despite experts in this field saying that PGM has existed since 1979. But herein lies an immediate difficulty as whilst in most research studies or trials efficacy – *the ability to achieve desired results* – is a standard avenue of enquiry, those who have written about PGM point out that it does not lend itself to such a linear line of thinking. Indeed, one of the distinct characteristics of PGM – *if done well and in its purist form some argue* – is the unpredictability of outcomes that needs to be associated with such grantmaking. Some go further to say that a theory of change for PGM is inappropriate, instead positing that the question 'what has changed' is the right framing for PGM outcomes evaluation, not 'has that change happened?[17]'

So perhaps it is little wonder that there is limited discussion about PGM efficacy and impact, rather a prevalence of studies, abstracts and thought leadership articles[18] that explore these topics instead:

- The role of PGM as part of desired changes to philanthropic infrastructure and practices – *in short participation is becoming a lever to disrupt and democratise philanthropy.*
- The importance of participation and more participatory approaches *for Foundations.*
- The role of PGM in relation to:
  - Power shifting dynamics - *as devolving power to those directly affected by grantmaking is intended to help overcome systemic inequality[19].*
  - Movement building.
  - Human rights, social justice and social activism.
- The associations between PGM and devolved decision making.
- How PGM – and philanthropy more generally – can learn from other fields that have participation at their core, such as community organising, community development, public problem solving, and deliberative democracy[20].

Published evaluations of PGM are similarly rare and where reports refer to them, the source material is not available to review the methodological strengths and weaknesses. The literature suggests that PGM pilots, typically funded by an originator, often then managed by an expert intermediary organisation, are more focused on evaluation of the **processes rather than outcomes**; and on **learning and improvement**. Where identified here are excerpts from some of the evaluations that have been published:

- The Ford Foundation is one of the most visible in the PGM field. In 2017, to determine the efficacy of participatory grantmaking for an institution like theirs—global, multi-issue, and not tied to any particular place or identity group, they commissioned a monograph by Cynthia Gibson, and in 2018, supported the GrantCraft guide referred to earlier. More recently, the Foundation has used grantee consultation and co-creation workshops to develop initiatives like the BUILD developmental evaluation. In 2019, the Foundation commissioned nine research projects that would build the evidence base about participatory grantmaking with interim learning available to view here[21].
- The Ford Foundation has engaged with the Women's Funding Network to examine participatory grantmaking practices of **place-based women's funds**. This study aimed to understand how these funds conduct their grantmaking, leadership, and advocacy work, including the principles of participatory grantmaking.

> *'Through the participatory process by which we selected these research projects, and from the future results of the projects themselves, we hope to continue learning about—and leaning into—these shifts in practice and power. As I am learning through my own efforts to practice this, **it can lead to different — and I would argue, better—decisions about who and what to fund**. Funders ceding power over grant decisions is relevant now more than ever given the momentum of movements for justice.'* - Christopher Cardona, Program Officer, Philanthropy.

- Elizabeth Dale, an assistant professor at Seattle University, conducted a study on how the Pride Foundation is shifting its grantmaking practice to align with the organisation's **racial equity core** and include **greater community participation** in setting funding priorities and making grant decisions. The MacArthur Foundation meantime reflected on its Chicago Commitment programme, which incorporated participatory grantmaking elements. They found that **trust, time, and transparency** were key themes in their process. This initiative sought to include diverse voices in philanthropy and distribute resources more equitably[22].

- In 2007, the Case Foundation launched its first public grants programme (ended in 2009), the 'Make It Your Own' programme[23] which challenged people from all walks of life to discuss what matters most to them, decide what kind of community they want and take action together. With nearly 5,000 applicants and more than 15,000 voters, the programme involved the public in nearly every aspect of **decision making** and used the latest web 2.0 tools to empower applicants to raise funds and supporters. In addition to supporting local civic engagement projects that reflected this ethos, the foundation decided to invite **non-grantmakers to participate in every step of the grantmaking process**—including setting grant guidelines, serving as proposal reviewers, and voting on proposals submitted by thousands of people across the country. Non-grantmakers selected the top 100 finalists with no input from the Foundation based on criteria they had developed in partnership with foundation staff members. The Foundation also collected data about every step, which was analysed by a set of outside evaluators to determine to what extent this program had been able to help **strengthen and support citizen-centered approaches to civic engagement**.

- Key results from the evaluation[24] were that 'two years after grants were awarded, 80% of (the 5,000 people who applied to the program) grantees were still highly engaged with their projects, took some kind of action in their communities and more than half of MIYO grantees had achieved 'concrete and significant outcomes at the two-year mark'. The attention this initiative received in the mainstream and field media also generated interest among other national foundations that met with MIYO organisers to help develop their own participatory approaches to grantmaking.

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CITIZEN-CENTERED APPROACHES ARE:

- Focused primarily on **culture change**, rather than short-term outcomes, issues, or victories.
- Representative of a **cross-section** of the entire community, rather than parts of it.
- Concerned with **deliberation** as much as tactics to address issues.
- About giving people the chance to form and promote their **own decisions**, self-govern, and build open civic processes.

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CITIZEN-CENTERED APPROACHES ARE NOT:

- **Structured** or pre-determined programs or campaigns to plug into.
- Focused on providing **training** or education.
- Planned, structured, or driven by outside **experts** or organizations.
- Attempting to inspire, persuade, or **manipulate** people to adopt a particular view or position.

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The evaluation of MIYO offered useful learning relating to **citizen-centred approaches** and the benefits of participatory approaches. Interestingly, one of the main findings of the evaluation was that **the best decisions and ideas emerge when both experts and "real people" are involved in exploring them[25].** Recognising that grant decisions voted on by the public can quickly become nothing more than popularity contests, the Foundation brought in a small group of advisors with experience in community building to help cull the list of finalists selected by non-grantmakers from 100 to 20. Those 20 proposals were then put forward to the public, who selected four grantees to receive larger grants. According to Diana Scearce, Gabriel Kasper, and Heather McLeod Grant in the Stanford Social Innovation Review: "*This mid-level culling allowed the Foundation to balance the creativity and emergent decision making of the group with the professional advice of experts in order to choose ultimate winners aligned with the Foundation's goals.*"

- As the Case Foundation example illustrates, the challenge for philanthropy—and for participatory work overall—is considering two, sometimes competing objectives at once: **"Fairness"** (participation involves those who will be affected by the outcomes of the process); and **"Wisdom"** (participation involves those who can inform the process to achieve better outcomes). Often, these objectives are not in conflict, because a fairer and *more inclusive process will most likely lead to better decisions*. But in other cases, it can be a difficult balance as foundations and others seek to create processes that draw on the expertise of those affected as well as that of individuals and groups who are deeply knowledgeable of the issues and possible solutions.

- According to *Engaging Residents: A New Call to Action for Community Foundations*, authored by CFLeads' Cultivating Community Engagement Panel, a diverse group of thirty-four individuals from philanthropy, academia, government, and neighbourhood and community organisations that work closely with residents—the '**result has been more involved communities and a high level of satisfaction with both the process and the outcome of public decision making**[26]."

- Interviews with more than thirty participatory grantmakers around the world, conducted as part of the research for Candid's GrantCraft publication *Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking*, underscore why this approach needs to be taken seriously. First, these funders have found that involving people with lived experience in the grantmaking process leads to **better grant decisions and outcomes.** Second, th**e process itself increases participants' sense of agency and leadership.** For these reasons, participatory grantmakers believe funders who aren't using participatory approaches may actually be impeding the impact they say they want to see.

- One evaluation completed in 2020-21 by CEI for the Paul Ramsay Foundation's Peer-to-Peer (P2P) program[27] – a multi-step model for collaborative decision making on grant allocation - in Australia provides insights on how a PGM approach can **support in achieving community outcomes and supporting collaboration and capacity-building for grantees**. However, obtaining peer-reviewed published evaluations of PGM has been challenging as the literature appears thin on the ground.

- 'While there are increasing amounts of European and global grantmakers utilizing more participatory methodologies in their grantmaking as a means **to move power** and increase the collective ability to **create social good**, there is yet to be any literature specifically exploring the links between these two fields. This conceptual paper concludes that 'user-driven innovation' (and in particular **co-creation / co-production** as a strategy to user-driven innovation) may provide the best examples of theory and practical relevance for those **utilizing PGM as a means to democratize philanthropy** in Europe and beyond.'

Some articles make claims that sound logical and reasonable but without referencing the basis for their assessment it is difficult to rely upon the assertions being made. Here is an example: 'Studies on participatory decision making show that **involving communities meaningfully leads to better outcomes**—if the community has a say over what gets funded, they are more likely to buy in and commit to making it effective. Community insights that might not be visible to outsiders can also lead to **more effective grantee selections**. Participatory grantmaking is also **more equitable**. Top-down decision making skirts the line into savior rhetoric that damages community trust while painting an unrealistic picture of problems and their solutions[28]'.

Meantime, a report recently published (May 2023) by the Centre for Evidence and Implementation explores **the state of evidence in participatory grantmaking (PGM)**. It investigates the benefits and challenges of PGM and provides recommendations for the sector on advancing practice and understanding. The report noted the lack of high-quality research in this area, due in part to the novelty of the practice and a general scarcity of research into grant-giving. However, the report highlighted the potential positives of a participatory approach, such as **stronger community relationships, greater networking, and innovation in grantmaking**, while also acknowledging challenges like the need for more time and resources, ensuring diversity, and addressing biases.

The research reveals that there is no "one way" to enable participation by grantees in decision making. Approaches range from low-consultation models to ones in which grantees drive allocation decisions. Moreover, the design of these approaches – who is involved, how, and in what decisions across what remits – varies significantly across institutions. Each approach has strengths and weaknesses depending on the context. As this is one of the strongest sources of evidence reviews identified for this feasibility study, its key findings are reproduced in full next and a webinar recording organised by Philanthropy Australia is also available [here][29].

'**While there is very little high-quality research available on PGM, the research that exists can give funders confidence that PGM holds promise and is worthy of further investment. While the evidence base does not support or disprove the claim that PGM is more effective than other ways of distributing funds or more likely to deliver innovative solutions[30] the preliminary evidence suggests that PGM is a promising approach that _may enable_**:

1. **Relationship building:** PGM _may_ be an approach for grantmakers to strengthen relationships with the communities and/or grantees they work with, and even between these communities / grantees themselves. Tapping into pre-existing networks to engage in PGM provides an accessible starting point, but grantmakers should consider the potential selection bias of doing so and ways to mitigate that.

2. **Networking and collaboration opportunities**: PGM _may_ offer increased networking and collaboration opportunities for non-grantmakers through activities embedded in the programmatic design. Grantmakers that are interested in helping non-grantmakers strengthen their networks _may_ potentially help open doors to further collaborative efforts through engaging them in PGM approaches.

3. **Knowledge about grantmaking, as well as capability-building**: PGM _may_ offer non-grantmakers a chance to learn about grantmaking firsthand. Guidance and training should be provided to build capacity and knowledge of non-grantmakers.

4. **Flexibility and innovation**: Engaging in PGM _may_ help grantmakers adopt more flexibility in responding to changing needs and support increased innovation for different models or ways of working.

5. **Transparency:** Grantmakers _may_ also enable and showcase greater transparency through PGM approaches, but this may be limited to cases when grantmakers implement transparent practices and processes.

The report also states that the PGM approach is not without its challenges:

1. **Time and capacity needed to build relationships and implement processes:** Shifting to PGM approaches may take time and resources to build trust and ensure accessibility.
2. **Difficulty in ensuring diversity and representativeness of participation:** Grantmakers should consider what representation of the target community looks like, how to ensure accessibility, and how to create a safe environment for participation.
3. **Inherent bias in the decision making process:** PGM does not eliminate bias in the decision making process; it shifts biases from grantors to grantees. Biases can manifest themselves in PGM and may partially be addressed through shifts in design.

'PGM ….is an area with significant interest among funders but, as this (CEI) review shows**,** [there is] **limited existing knowledge of what works**. We therefore recommend that grantmakers pilot, trial, and evaluate PGM approaches. We strongly urge grantmakers to share their learnings publicly so that the sector can accelerate better practice. As PGM continues to gain traction in mainstream philanthropy, we expect stronger evidence of what works in PGM, when, for whom, and under what conditions, to emerge. We'd love to see more grantmakers publishing and sharing their pilots and evaluations of participatory approaches. This will help the whole sector accelerate best practice in the field.'

And in this related call to action; 'Major funders who call for evidence on the benefits of participatory grantmaking should fund some learning infrastructure such as impact evaluations. Recently the European Cultural Foundation did this by supporting a values-led[31] evaluation of FundAction, the new participatory fund and platform in Europe. This will support FundAction's development and help build evidence on the benefits and challenges of this approach'[32].

> **These studies and experiences indicate that while participatory grantmaking is seen as a promising approach to philanthropy, further research and evaluation is necessary to fully understand its impact and efficacy.**

In its PGM Toolkit Camden Giving's response to this FAQ: 'What is the evidence PGM works?' is as follows: 'PGM is currently a fringe movement and there have been **no formal studies establishing it as a "better" way of giving grants than traditional funding mechanisms. But it's worth noting that there is little evidence that traditional funding mechanisms are having an impact on long-term structural power imbalances**. Camden Giving has published a report on the impact of PGM in practice over the last 5 years. As of 1st September 2022, Camden Giving has awarded **£6.1m** in the form of **575 grants**, awarded by **180 community resident panellists**. These grants have been made via a variety of (*15 participatory*) funds, each with a range of criteria, aims and aspirations. The report 'shines a light on the brilliant impact Camden's grassroots organisations have been able to achieve as a result.'

The 5 year outcomes report is organised thematically, with examples of practice that support the general finding that their evolving PGM experiences are contributing to **better outcomes for Camden citizens**.

The prime enabler of effective PGM is local knowledge. 'The knowledge of community panellists on very niche, specialist areas alongside **experience of the intersections of inequality and barriers, which may not typically be held by traditional grantmakers**, is a key asset to participatory grantmaking.'

OUTCOMES FROM 5 YEARS OF PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING

CAMDEN GIVING

The report posits:

'At best, most grantmakers are responding to the needs of Londoners by reviewing research and consultancy, which by its nature only captures things that have happened and varies in reliability. Grantmakers may consult with their potential or previous grantees, but this will never truly be a representation of the views and wants of London's communities. In contrast, participatory grantmaking works with the deep knowledge that communities have, taking in to consideration millions of factors that real lives teach us.

Camden Giving's participatory grantmaking has benefits from being informed by knowledge that traditional grantmaking struggles to capture, this ultimately means that funding goes to places where it is most helpful.' Examples of the benefits of PGM include:

- How it more equitably **funds under-funded marginalised community leaders** as an important means of overcoming injustice. At Camden Giving 70-80% of projects funded are black or minority ethnic led, this is because participatory grantmaking decisions are made by people who have experienced marginalisation and are therefore more likely to have trust in and recognise the strength of black and brown community leaders.
- How it enables more **equitable access to funding for grassroots organisations** with support for them to become more financially sustainable and less reliant on securing small grants from Camden Giving.
- How it provides a mechanism **more likely to fund well-regarded organisations** that can deliver for communities owing to the influencing factors of community reputation and perception – this is seen in the way decisions are made at panels about who does or doesn't receive funding locally.
- Decisions to award projects that have fully considered **accessibility and inclusion factors** for residents – those that fail to consider practicalities are more likely to not receive funding.
- **Responsive funding** to meet, sometimes rapidly changing, community expectations which are also often hard to predict. PGM is thought to have moved quickly to reflect what was important in Camden during lockdown for example. Interestingly, Camden Giving (professional) staff expected communities to place a greater emphasis on urgent basic relief and whilst these were supported, the emphasis on valuing arts and culture activities in the borough was strong.

PGM experiences in Camden suggest that it enables **better outcomes for communities** and that 'participatory grantmaking builds power, connectivity and networks within communities. The value of the process is as important as the outcomes of the grants.' There have been benefits in:

- Better awareness of local assets and services resulting in **better community signposting** - Camden Giving have seen people involved in participatory grantmaking also signposting to projects that they didn't fund.
- **Employment** - the majority of the people involved in Camden Giving's participatory grantmaking are unemployed or underemployed. We've seen that around 10% of panellists have directly gained employment through participatory grantmaking, this is down to an increased confidence, skills and networks.
- The way in which 1 in 10 of the people involved in participatory grantmaking in Camden go on to **initiate some sort of social action within their community**. PGM is a catalyst for community-led change beyond the grantmaking itself.

Participants feeling **increased self-determined power**: 'At Camden Giving we survey all out-going participatory grantmakers and ask them if they feel more powerful and 100% of those responding say awarding grants has made them feel more powerful.' Other skills developed through PGM included **critical thinking, empathy, self-awareness and new knowledge** in funding and how it works for services they attend.

PGM is thought to have **influencing benefits** too says Camden Giving: 'We know that, to overcome local inequality, we can't do the work alone. We have seen businesses, funders and local government, who hold significant power in Camden, devolve decision making powers, increase participatory and democratic approaches and adopt learnings from Camden Giving. We've seen that they are better targeting their efforts on key issues and have an increased local impact for local resident and communities through our interactions. Camden Council have delegated funding through Camden Giving across a number of grant programmes, from Future Changemakers fund to our COVID-19 Emergency response, because they acknowledge that there is often a lack of trust between civil society organisations and local government officials, know that we can reach communities who are underfunded more effectively and that we can move funding and resources to grassroots organisations much quicker. Most recently we have also seen an increased desire for them to work in a more participatory, collaborative way to devolve grant funding to those furthest from accessing funding, including granting funds to individual citizens through the We Make Camden Kit; of which 45% of grants of £1500 have been awarded to Camden citizens.'

As more of these practical examples build over time, led by inspired organisations such as Camden Giving, confidence in PGM's ability as an approach to derive benefits will build as the evidence base becomes stronger. In the meantime, we must be dispassionate in the current assessment for this feasibility study which finds no **reliable** <u>evidence</u> that PGM routinely, or in a generalisable, way:

- Delivers **better or more effective decisions** compared to 'onward grantmaking' or more traditional grantmaking methodologies. And many commentators ask, 'who decides whether a decision is more effective than another anyway?'
- Provides **more sustainable individual, organisational, community[33] or system change outcomes than alternatives methodologies**.
- **Shifts power**. This is a much wider topic than the scope of this limited feasibility study and a more forensic review would be required to identify the correlation s between PGM and power dynamics. There is meantime a belief that PGM and associated participatory approaches have a role to play in activity promoting social justice and equity.
- Compares favourably in terms of **cost-benefit analysis** or **value** to other community grantmaking methods.

Instead, we find literature that tends to explore the theorised benefits of participation more generally rather than the specific benefits of PGM. Participation is *theorised* to add value in terms of:

- **Legitimacy** – *Participation lends credibility to and conveys authenticity about the process.*
- **Outcomes** – *Participation leads to better/wiser outcomes, decisions or actions.*
- **Agency** – *Participants gain a sense of agency and control over the processes and decisions affecting them.*

This is not to say that PGM could or does not deliver these kind of benefits. It is just that the evidence base is currently weak in being able to assert such claims in a way that someone thinking about investing in PGM as an alternative to or displacement of current grantmaking could rely on.

We have not been able to identify any evidence-based study that suggests one model of PGM is more effective than another. The field of PGM is still evolving, and the effectiveness of different models appears to depend on various factors, including **the specific goals of the grantmaking programme, the context in which it is applied, and the stakeholders involved**.

There are, however, many learning lessons and reflections shared by Foundations and intermediary organisations about the approaches they trialled and how those models were selected, learned about and executed. While comprehensive comparative studies may be limited, individual case studies and analyses of specific PGM initiatives can provide valuable insights into the strengths and

challenges of different approaches. For example, studies on the impact of PGM in specific sectors like **arts funding, social justice, or community development** can offer insights into the effectiveness of various models in those contexts. Where such case studies are published these are the observations and insights:

- **In the arts sector:** Observations: PGM often focuses on involving artists and community members in the decision making process. This can lead to more diverse and inclusive funding decisions, supporting a broader range of artistic expressions. Insights: Studies and reports in this area may highlight the impact of PGM on fostering community engagement, supporting underrepresented artists, and promoting cultural diversity.
- **Social Justice**: Observations: PGM in social justice often aims to empower marginalized communities and ensure that funding aligns with the actual needs and priorities of those communities. Insights: Research in this sector might explore the role of PGM in enhancing the effectiveness of social justice initiatives, promoting equity, and addressing power imbalances in funding.
- **Community Development**: Observations: In community development, PGM can play a significant role in ensuring that local communities have a say in how funds are used, which can lead to more sustainable and relevant projects. Insights: Studies may focus on the impact of PGM on community engagement, local empowerment, and the long-term sustainability of development projects.

The most comprehensive mapping of PGM in the UK[34] appears to have been undertaken by The Advocacy Team for The National Lottery which reported its findings in 2023. Whilst not evaluative in scope, it provides useful insights about the PGM activities and behaviours of 40 organisations completing the survey. As with the other literature, the research suggests that it would be beneficial to evaluate different types of participation models and assess the impact of PGM funding compared to non-participatory grantmaking.

Survey question: What are the main benefits of using PGM approaches for funders and for the people and communities that you involve?

Organisations highlighted benefits in several key areas:
1. **More responsive and informed grantmaking:** People and communities with lived experience of specific issues bring unique expertise and understanding, which enables grantmaking to be more impactful.
2. **Reaching a wider range of marginalised groups:** PGM can often be the best way to fund the most radical work neglected elsewhere. It can also remove barriers to certain groups and people applying because they know their funding applications are being evaluated by fellow members of the community.
3. **Less bureaucratic processes**: PGM can enable a less bureaucratic selection and reporting process, which allows for a greater focus on the impact of the work.
4. **Wider changes to funding approaches:** Adopting PGM approaches has led to broader conversations about power and collective decision-making elsewhere in the organisation.
5. **Contributes to shifting power in the funding ecosystem,** by ceding decision-making power to communities served. This in turn helps to build trust and greater knowledge equity between funders and the people and groups they fund.

- Organisations noted that specific benefits to people and communities served through PGM include **access to paid opportunities to make direct funding decisions** and participating in forums where they can **exercise agency** and be **recognised for their expertise**, both as a result of their lived experience as well as in other areas, as relevant to the work.

"[PGM] helps us as a funder to keep our finger on the pulse in an ever-changing environment. If we didn't work with community leaders and residents and enact on what's happening on the ground, we would likely become static and not serving our purpose."

There has meantime been a huge amount of evaluation and learning about **Big Local**[35] which requires further time than this feasibility study has afforded to truly understand. A number of papers have been considered including the May 2022 'Residents in Control' community grants in Big Local

Area report by Local Trust and IVAR which identifies lessons around **decision making** linked to Big Local's ambition to **increase community control** and also the theme of **building local capacity** – *a theme readers will see later was an important topic in the primary research for this study*.

Interestingly, and perhaps surprisingly, the consultant did not see explicit or obvious reference to PGM in the Big Local research literature on its work to learn lessons about the context, conditions and considerations for what it regards as successful community grantmaking, a topic perhaps worth picking up nationally with The National Lottery, Local Trust and IVAR? Similarly, there is literature about putting power into the hands of communities that is beyond the scope of this study, but that is very relevant to the wider context within which PGM might potentially be framed in North Yorkshire in future (for example the series of reports by Local Trust around trust and power[36]).

Thus, this feasibility study becomes more about understanding **the potential and promise of PGM** rather than something that can be proven to deliver greater impact, value for money or added value compared to other grantmaking approaches. The literature reviewed appears forged by authors of the **belief** that PGM is the right thing to do. For even the most experienced PGM practitioners it is still described as an **ethos** (or **set of principles**) and **processes** requiring a mind-set that is predisposed to **risk and experimentation**. There appears to be nothing certain about PGM and this is important for any individual, organisation, institution, community, system or place to recognise if considering whether to start or amplify participatory grantmaking in their context.

Some literature reviewed posits though that PGM is not merely an experimental model rather a practice rooted in the commitment to transform power relations between those with resources and those without. It's driven by the need for representation, transparency, and accountability to movements, particularly in a rapidly changing world. PGM allows grantseekers to actively participate in decision making processes rather than being passive recipients of aid. This approach can theoretically build trust and accountability between grantmakers and grantseekers, fostering stronger and more effective community engagement.

In this 2019 NPQ article: **'**Moving beyond Feedback: The Promise of Participatory Grantmaking' author Cynthia Gibson acknowledges that there is much for the field of philanthropy to learn from '**other fields that have participation at their core, such as community organising, community development, public problem solving, and deliberative democracy**'. For decades, practitioners and scholars in those fields have grappled with how to engage ordinary people in decision making that goes beyond asking them for feedback and/or input to seeing them as actors in all facets of planning, implementing, assessing, and developing efforts to strengthen communities. What can philanthropy learn from their efforts? A lot. A review of this work, in fact, surfaces knowledge that's remarkably consistent across these different fields:

- Decision making and problem-solving processes need to involve the people most affected by an issue or problem because they have first-hand knowledge and experience.
- Authentic participation involves two-way or multidirectional communication, rather than didactic approaches that inform or "educate" people with no avenue for their feedback, input, or active engagement.
- Collaborative problem solving that involves the equitable participation of diverse people, voices, ideas, and information can lead to better outcomes and decisions.
- Community organisations and government need to work with—rather than for—the public.
- Experts and professionals aren't necessarily the drivers of problem solving or decision making but are partners with the public in those processes.
- Transparency—about decision making processes, who is involved, what decisions are made, and how they will be implemented—is essential to authentic participation[37].'

The article goes on to say: 'Some funders who want to experiment with participatory approaches say they're hesitant because they're not sure what the "rules" are. One of the beautiful things about participatory work is that because it's inherently iterative and relational, there is no "right way" to do it. So, while there is general consensus about the values that drive participatory grantmaking, there's considerable variation in how it's practiced[38]."

There has been less published activity about PGM practiced by local authorities although '*A Better Way Network*' helpfully convened PGM discussions about PGM in February 2022[39] which attracted a mixed audience including local authorities who were trialling PGM as part of wider efforts to **share and build power** with residents and communities. The summary of that convened session is reproduced below:
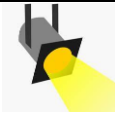
 Spotlight on Barking and Dagenham

The first opening speaker was Cameron Bray, from **Barking and Dagenham Giving**, who explained how an endowment fund of £1 million had been created from external fund-raising and income from social housing and half of this is being determined through participatory means, using various approaches in a 'big DJ mixing deck approach', as follows:

A panel model, with participants being representative in terms of geography and also community of identity. Members shape the priorities of the fund and take the final decisions. A community steering group was being developed to design investment policy from scratch with the freedom to determine priorities. A closed collective pilot run by a young people's network, where they collectively make decisions and are sharing the power and accountability between themselves.

Learning: These approaches need a lot of resources, he said, including paying people for their time and induction, but they had found the process was valuable in itself as an investment in the community and its empowerment.
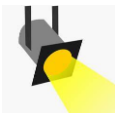
 Spotlight on Avon and Bristol

Lucy Gilbert, from the **Quartet Community Foundation in Avon**, told us about her experience of *participatory budgeting*, explaining that they were part of Bristol City Funds, set up in collaboration with **Bristol City Council** and Bristol and Bath Regional Council, which was implementing a 'One City Plan' to deliver systemic change. They too had found that processes were almost more important than the money itself and they had been exploring different ways for shifting power:

Setting up a grant panel for their health and well-being budget of £1.3 million, where 40% of the panel had lived experience and members are given training and payment for their time.

A panel of 100% people with lived experience making decisions for the Bristol Local Food Fund, which is a £60K fund raised through crowdfunding specifically to go to local food organisations. Members will be trained and paid at Living Wage rates.

A pilot 'City Lab', with decisions for a fund of £14,000 over 6 months devolved to people with lived experience of mental health difficulties, and local organisations and involving a community research exercise to come up with solutions and committed to developing fundable projects.

The most visible local authorities – and or name-checked local authorities mentioned by primary research interviewees for this study - appear to be in London, particularly councils that are part of 'London's Giving[40]' which describes itself thus: Place based giving is a movement that is taking hold across London and is mobilising communities at a grassroots level to act to strengthen their boroughs'.

Barking and Dagenham, Camden and Islington
Councils in particular have been mentioned by interviewees during this study and each has shared resources relating to PGM practice from their ongoing learning about the practice such as: 'Participatory Grantmaking Toolkit from London Funders and Camden Giving'[41] last updated in May 2023. This resource is a very worthwhile read. Other local authorities that are known to be involved with PGM are Bristol City Council[42] and Plymouth City Council[43].

If readers are interested in a more comprehensive system-change approach to participation please visit Participatory City which describes the significant endeavours in Barking and Dagenham to embed participation in its 'every one every day' projects. Please note this goes well beyond the scope of PGM which is the focus of this feasibility study.

Summary: evidence about PGM

The evidence base relating to the efficacy and impact of PGM is currently limited and the debate about the best way anyway to measure its success is a point of contention. PGM is believed to deliver a range of benefits that could be distinguished from non-participatory grantmaking methodologies, but the type and scale of changes will depend on the specific context wherein PGM is being practiced.

Case studies and available evaluations point to PGM's promise rather than its proven ability to achieve desired outcomes.

The literature suggests that PGM offers promise, potential and a different value to non-participatory grantmaking alternatives. It may lead to different and more unpredictable outcomes with gains reported for individuals (agency, self-determined power, critical thinking, self-awareness, supported leadership), grantees (capacity building and equitable access for 'grassroots'), communities (relationship building, different decisions about who and what gets funded reaching more marginalised people than the norm, enduring community action, community leadership), funders (more equitable resource distribution).

Conversely, PGM is not without its challenges as it requires time and capacity to build relationships and implement processes, difficulty in ensuring diversity and representativeness of participation and a shift in bias in the decision making process.

There are, however, many live, useful practical resources, guides, publications, toolkits, blogs and a dedicated global PGM community of practice for those wishing to start and / or improve their PGM practice.

Please see Appendices for a list of useful links.

7.0   Chapter 4: PGM models and processes

There are a variety of PGM models and processes practised around the world. Here is one illustration of the core elements of PGM.
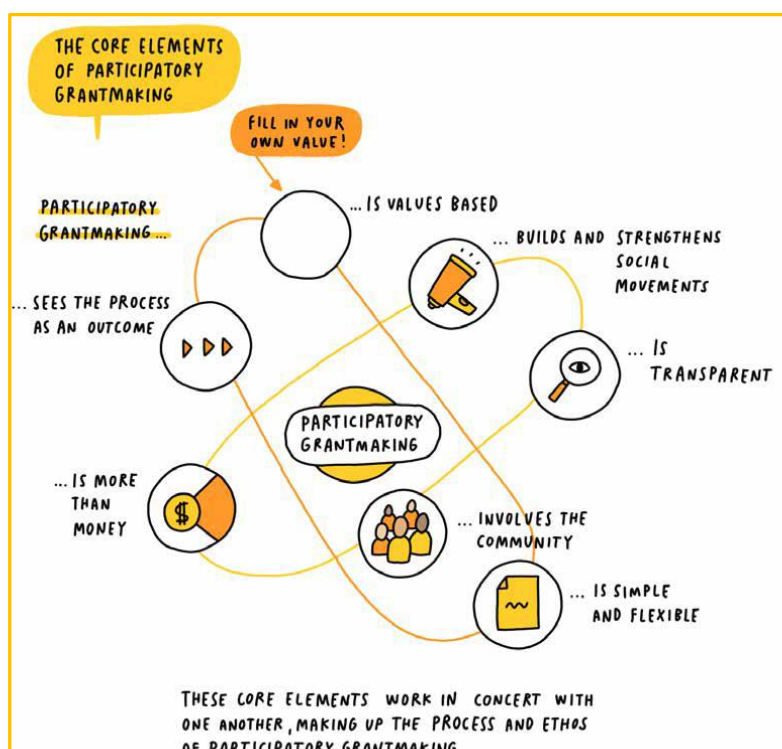
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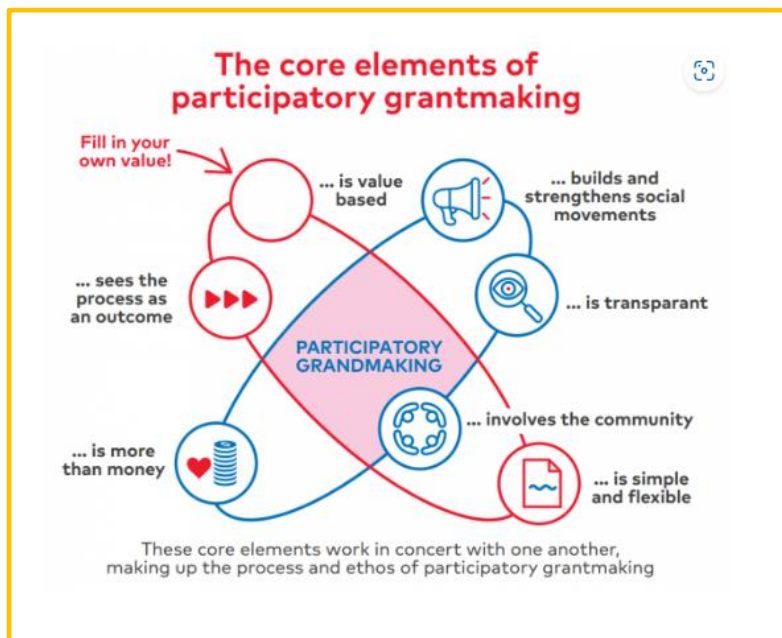
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Following on the next pages are some descriptors of the different PGM models available and their key characteristics. The 'Participatory Grantmaking:UK Landscape Mapping Survey' (February 2023) found that over a third of (40 responding) organisations across all levels of PGM funding use **community boards** as part of funding decision making, which entails members of the community directly allocating grants. The next most common model is the **representative board**, whereby a mixture of funders join community members in making funding decisions.

What? Types of PGM
Participatory committees

Representative participation

Participatory Committees: this form, which is the most common in the PGM movement (*globally*), mimics traditional philanthropy in that proposals are submitted based on a set of criteria/guidelines, and then a committee reviews those proposals and makes decisions (Source: A Primer for Participatory Grantmaking - Non Profit News | Nonprofit Quarterly, November 2021.

Subcategories:

- **Representative participation models:** Having sector experts, individuals with lived experience or community members on decision making panels, committees or boards.

- Similarly known as: **Representative Committee:** committee includes community representatives *together with* traditional decision makers (donors, board members, program officers). Having donors on the committee can be strategic in some cases and can risk more complicated power dynamics. It can also be necessary to involve donors for ongoing fundraising purposes.

As mentioned, **community board** is the most common model amongst the UK-based organisations. Examples of community committee: North Star Fund, Chinook Fund, Global Greengrants, The Equality Fund, Trans Justice Funding Project, Pawanka Fund, Arctic Indigenous Fund).

What? Types of PGM
Participatory committees

Community boards

Community Committee: all committee members come from or represent the community they serve. This can be people from a specific neighbourhood, a membership network, or people who come from a particular community

Community Board models: Where the whole decision making board is made up of community members, sector experts or individuals with lived experience. There are various ways of choosing who these people are such as interview, selection or democratic election.

What? Types of PGM
Participatory committees

Rolling Collective
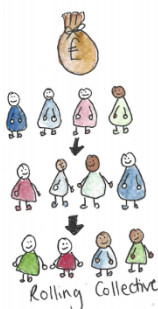
Rolling Applicant Committee: Those who receive funding become the committee for the next cycle of funding

Rolling Collective Model: All grant recipients are involved in the process of both receiving and giving funding. Those who receive funding will then make decisions for the next round of funding.

Flow Funding/Onward Granting: funder selects another individual or nonprofit to pass grant funding forward, giving the individual or organization the opportunity to make their decision independently (example: Flow Funding)

Example of rolling applicant committee: Thank You Charitable Trust

Example of Flow Funding / Onward Granting: Flow Funding

What? Types of PGM
Collective Groups
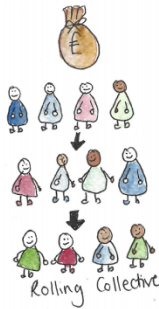
Collective Groups – this form of PGM uses different processes for proposal review and decision making where there are opportunities to include the people and organisations requesting funding, as well as members from the public. Proposals/funding requests are reviewed, and funding decisions made, through a collaborative group process where all participants have equal power.

Examples of closed collectives: Shared Gifting, Maine Network of Community Food Councils, Action Learning Seed Fund.

What? Types of PGM
Collective Groups, subcategories

- **Closed Collective:** Applicants review each other's proposals/funding requests and decide together how to distribute funds to each other
- **Closed Collective Model:** Most appropriate for a small place or sector. Involves bringing all relevant organisations together to collectively understand needs and decide how best to spend funding available through consensus decision making.
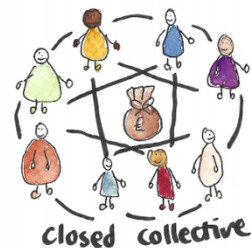
What? Types of PGM
Collective Groups, subcategories

- **Open Collective:** Applicants together with a variety of participants (applicants, donors, community members, etc.) decide together through a collective process
- **Applicant Collective:** all applicants for funding review proposals and decide through a collective voting process

Examples of open collectives: Fund Action, Edge Fund, New England Grassroots Fund).

Examples of applicant collectives: Solidarity Fund, FRIDA.

What? Types of PGM. Other categories

Direct Transfers: Looks to alleviate poverty by removing the middle organisation out of the equation with cash going directly from a funder to an individual with no application, monitoring or reporting. It allows the individual to spend the money direction on what they need for their situation.
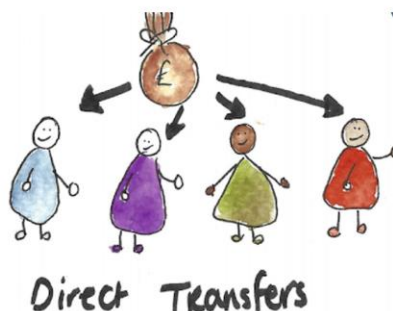
Crowdfunding: Communities come together to fundraise and spend money on issues of importance to them.

Direct Transfers

Crowd Funding
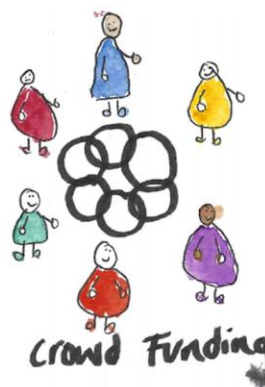
For reference, the PGM UK Landscape Mapping Survey found the prevalence of each model amongst its 40 responding organisations as follows.

Survey findings: Models of participation

KEY TAKEAWAY: Over a third of organisations across all levels of PGM funding use community boards as part of funding decision-making. The next most common model is the representative board, followed by the open collective/community vote model.

Models of participation according to level of PGM funding

- Community boards
- Representative board
- Rolling collective
- Closed/ applicant collective
- Open collective/ community votes
- Onward granting/ flow funding

(50% or less PGM funding; Between 50% and 100% PGM funding; 100% PGM funding)
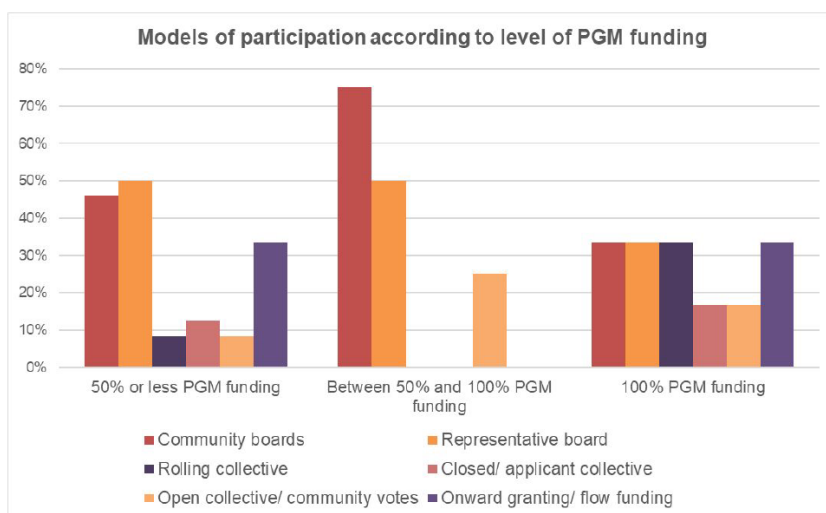
Definition of models:
- **Community board:** only community members make decisions on funding. No donor or funder has a decision on where the funding goes.
- **Representative board:** a mixture of funders/donors join community members in making decisions.
- **Rolling collective:** a cohort of grantholders make the decisions about who the following cohort of grantholders will be.
- **Closed/applicant collective:** the applicants to a programme make the decisions together, by vote or deliberation.
- **Open collective/community votes:** community members vote on the decisions made.
- **Onward granting/flow funding:** funding other organisations to distribute the funding on their behalf.

Models drawn from *Grassroots grantmaking embedding participatory approaches in funding*, by Hannah Paterson, link.

As part of the **York Deciding Together** PGM activity, participants pulled together this useful overview to guide their decision making about what model might be most appropriate for their context.

Representative participation models	Community Board models	Closed Collective Model:	Open Collective Model:	Rolling Collective Model:
Donors and/or funders, sector experts, individuals with lived experience or community members on decision making panels, committees or boards together.	The whole decision making group is made up of community members, sector experts or individuals with lived experience. There are various ways of choosing who these people such as interview, selection or democratic election.	Most appropriate for a small place or sector. Involves bringing all relevant organisations together to collectively understand needs and decide how best to spend funding available through consensus decision making.	All interested parties, including applicants participate in funding decisions through voting this can be in person or online.	All grant recipients are involved in the process of both receiving and giving funding. Those who receive funding will then make decisions for the next round of funding.
Example: Children in Need Grants Committee	**Example:** CrippleGate Foundation in Islington have a Youth Panel where all the decisions are made about a youth fund allocation	**Example:** Streetgames and Sport England brought together groups to tackle youth violence who also developed plan around funding and shared resources	**Example:** Tokens votes as you leave supermarkets	**Example:** The Leaders with Lived Experience programme at The National Lottery community Fund; all the grant holders are invited to be decision makers and who ever is up for it joins the panel
Possible Pros	**Possible Pros**	**Possible Pros**	**Possible Pros**	**Possible Pros**
Shared learning	Power Sharing	Relationship building	Inclusive	Build on learning each round.
Can be organised quickly	People closest to issue making decisions	Collaboratiion	Engages large numbers in the decision making	Builds relationships between funder and funded.
Possible Limits	**Possible Limits**	**Possible Limits**	**Possible Limits**	**Possible Pros**
Power dynamics	Time consuming	Specific identificaiton of need required	Popular causes are often funded	Build on learning each round.
Who identifies the right representation	How the group is formed	could restrict who can access the funding	Typically includes more than one stage of application so it takes time.	Builds relationships between funder and funded.
				Possible Limits
				Increased workload for funded groups.
				May be biased to funding same type of work

There are also relevant models outside of philanthropy that are about encouraging **public participation in decision making** used in the fields of community organising, community development and deliberative democracy – the most referenced in the literature being **Arnstein's 'Ladder of Participation'**.
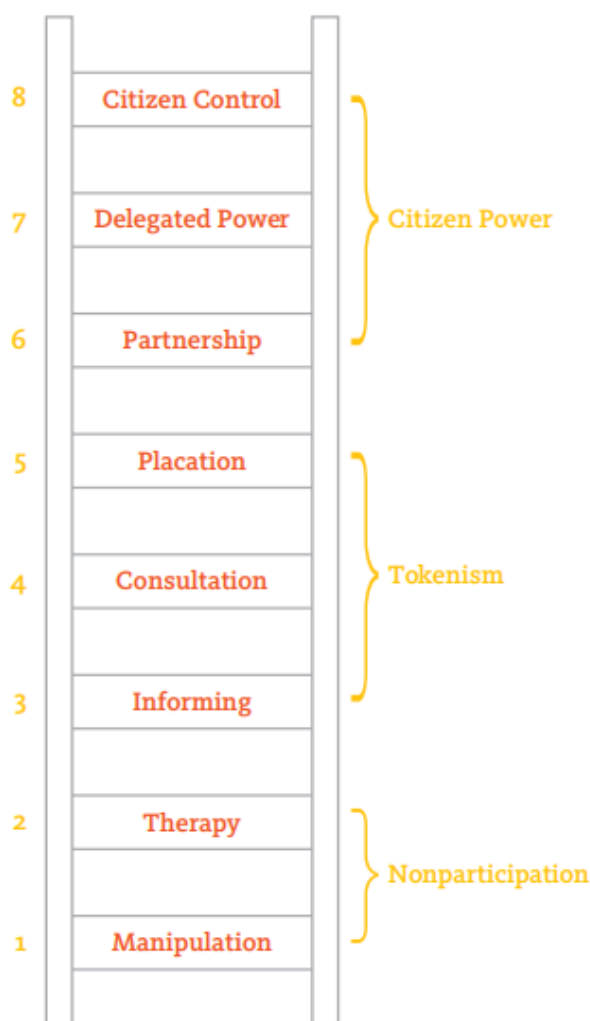
What Are Some Participatory Models and Frameworks Developed Outside Philanthropy?

There are scores of frameworks for encouraging public participation in decision making that can be (and have been) used by a variety of fields. Below are two frameworks that have become standards, as well as one that is less well-known but that captures the core components of participatory practice across many fields.

Arnstein Ladder of Participation

While working at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the 1960s, Sherry Arnstein developed an influential model for understanding citizen involvement in planning and policy-making processes. Her "ladder of citizen participation" created several categories of involvement ranging from a high to low participation.

Step	Rung	Category
8	Citizen Control	
7	Delegated Power	Citizen Power
6	Partnership	
5	Placation	
4	Consultation	Tokenism
3	Informing	
2	Therapy	Nonparticipation
1	Manipulation	

Citizen Control. Participants ("the public") handle the entire job of planning, policy making and managing a program or initiative with no intermediaries.

Delegated power. Participants have a clear majority of seats on committees with delegated powers to make decisions and assure accountability.

Partnership. Planning and decision-making responsibilities are shared through joint committees of participants and public officials/experts.

Placation. Participants can advise but public officials and other power holders have the right to judge the legitimacy or feasibility of the input.

Consultation. Public officials and other decision makers use surveys, community meetings and public inquiries to elicit and gauge participants' opinions.
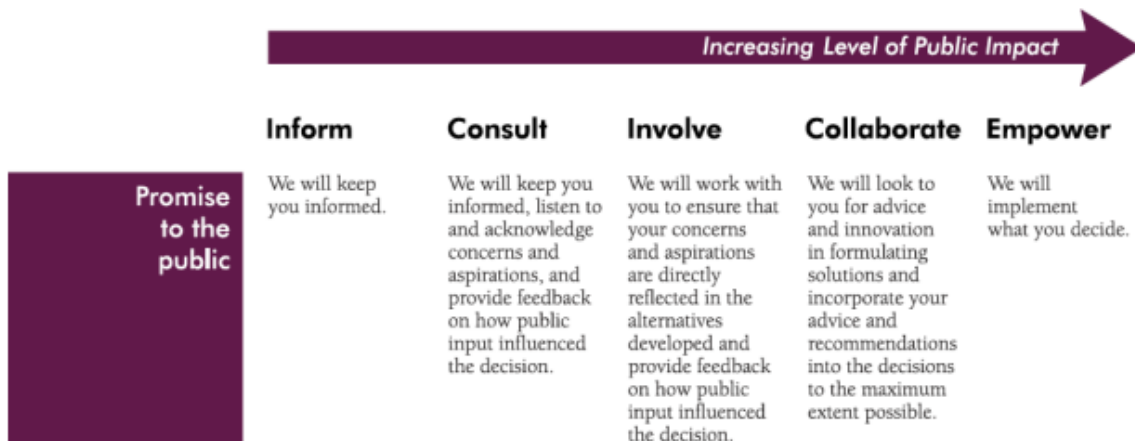
Informing. Public officials and other power holders create a one-way information flow with no feedback channels for participant reactions or input.

Manipulation and **Therapy** (Nonparticipatory). Public officials and other power holders seek to "cure" or "educate" participants, using public relations strategies to build public support.

IAP2 Public Engagement Spectrum

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) developed the Spectrum of Public Participation to define the varying roles of the public in participatory processes. The spectrum is non-judgmental and based on IAP2's belief that participatory approaches depend on factors such as goals, timeframes and available resources. Over time, the spectrum has been used to shape public participation plans around the world.

Increasing Level of Public Impact

Promise to the public	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

Della Rucker/Wise Economy

In work with Wise Economy, Della Rucker offers a framework for participation that boils it down to four key components that consistently emerge in participatory research and practice, no matter what the field or discipline. The framework Rucker developed reflects how participatory options can range along a spectrum from generally less to more active engagement. Like the IAP2 framework, Rucker's makes it clear that no one form of participation is more valuable or "right." Rather, all four participation types have appropriate uses depending on the circumstances.

The four types are:

Telling – Information is shared in a one-way direction—from informants to the public. The public are not active participants in decisions, nor can they ask questions or challenge the presenters. If participants are asked for feedback, there is no expectation that their comments will be used to influence decisions.
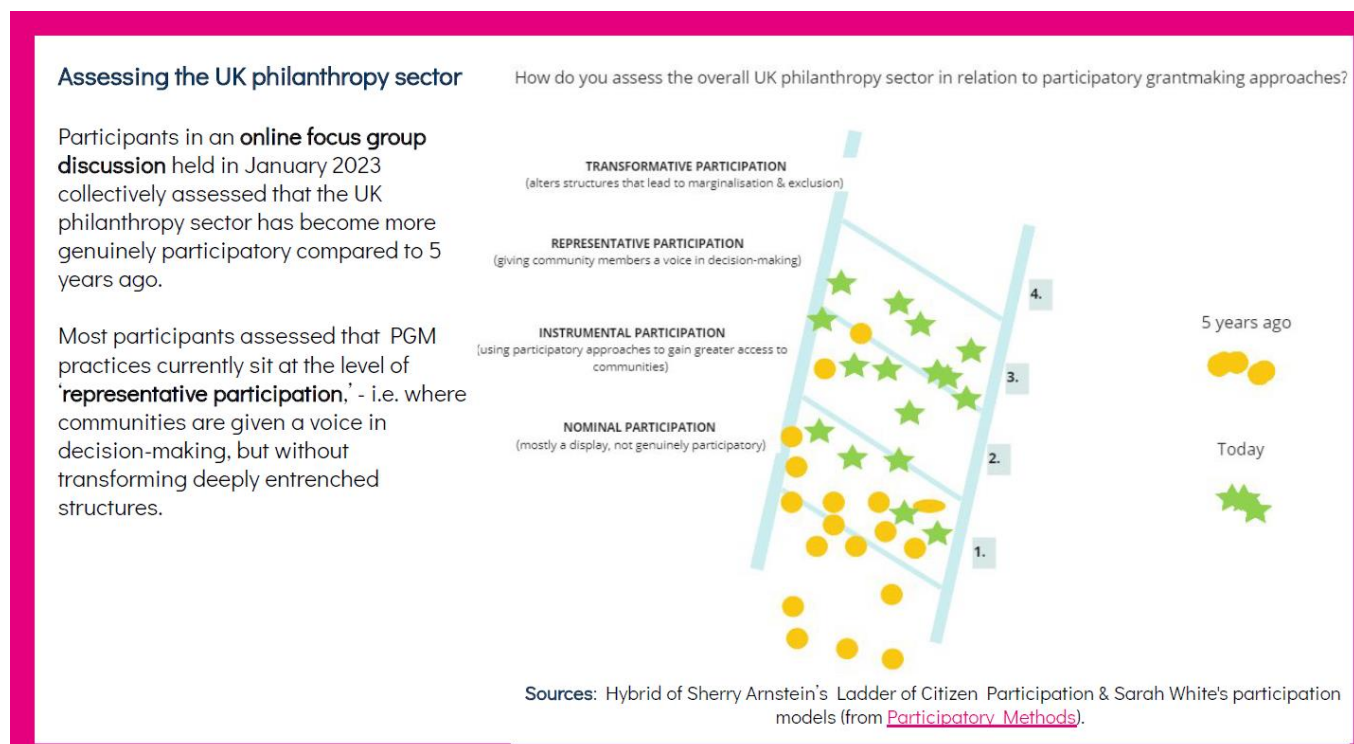
Asking - Information is still one-way but reversed, with participants providing ideas, recommendations or insight through surveys, brainstorming activities, dialogues, etc. The goal is to give participants the chance to make their voices heard on issues they care about. There is no guarantee, however, that their ideas will be incorporated into the resulting plan or product.
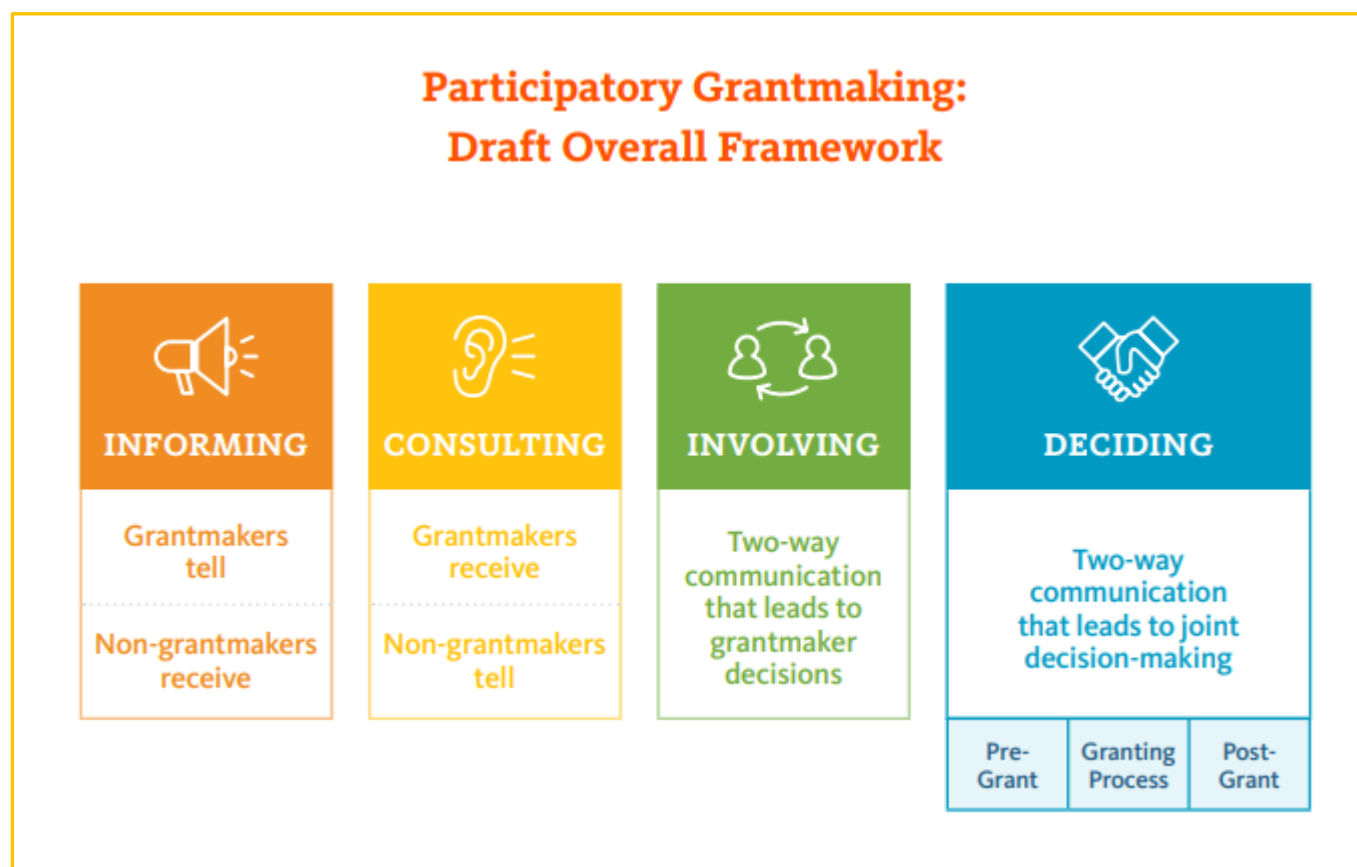
Discussing – There is a two-way exchange of information and ideas between the public and decision makers. The goal of this process, which is usually conducted in smaller groups, is to forge more understanding of the variety of perspectives of different people in the community. These discussions often require more time than the approaches above and are limited to a smaller set of participants. Also, while discussions can surface a wider variety of insights and ideas, they do not necessarily result in a strong sense of direction, priorities or concrete action steps.

Deciding – This is a collaborative decision-making process involving the public and officials about priority setting, strategies, and resource allocation. The key difference between discussing and deciding is that the latter leads to "a clear, well-informed and defensible guide to next steps, allocation of resources and other decisions that were directed and generated by the public." If participation is not fully inclusive or representative, the results can be skewed toward special interests, and decisions may not reflect what the larger community actually needs.

The PGM Landscape Mapping Study in the UK (February 2023) found this self-reported assessment of the state of participatory approaches within the philanthropy sector.


Assessing the UK philanthropy sector

Participants in an **online focus group discussion** held in January 2023 collectively assessed that the UK philanthropy sector has become more genuinely participatory compared to 5 years ago.

Most participants assessed that PGM practices currently sit at the level of 'representative participation,' - i.e. where communities are given a voice in decision-making, but without transforming deeply entrenched structures.

How do you assess the overall UK philanthropy sector in relation to participatory grantmaking approaches?

TRANSFORMATIVE PARTICIPATION
(alters structures that lead to marginalisation & exclusion)

REPRESENTATIVE PARTICIPATION
(giving community members a voice in decision-making)

INSTRUMENTAL PARTICIPATION
(using participatory approaches to gain greater access to communities)

NOMINAL PARTICIPATION
(mostly a display, not genuinely participatory)

5 years ago

Today

Sources: Hybrid of Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation & Sarah White's participation models (from Participatory Methods).

Cynthia Gibson[46] has proposed this PGM 'starter framework' to benefit institutional philanthropy.

Participatory Grantmaking: Draft Overall Framework

INFORMING	CONSULTING	INVOLVING	DECIDING
Grantmakers tell	Grantmakers receive	Two-way communication that leads to grantmaker decisions	Two-way communication that leads to joint decision-making
Non-grantmakers receive	Non-grantmakers tell		

| | Pre-Grant | Granting Process | Post-Grant |

Other interpretations mirror the framework above, but illustrate the difference in approach to, for example, conventional or consultative grantmaking as seen in the example below from Canada.

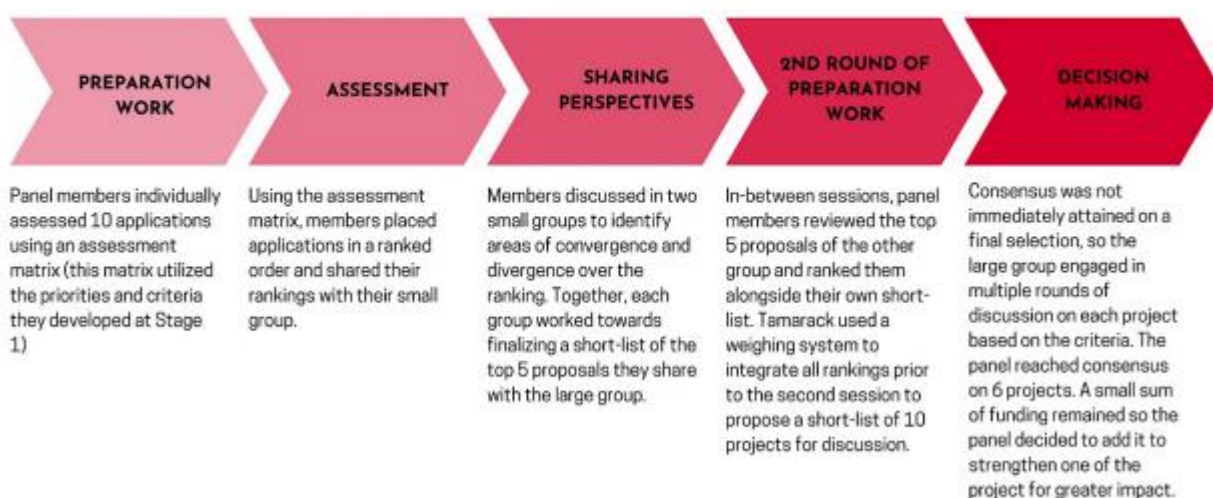Figure 1: The Participatory Grantmaking Model
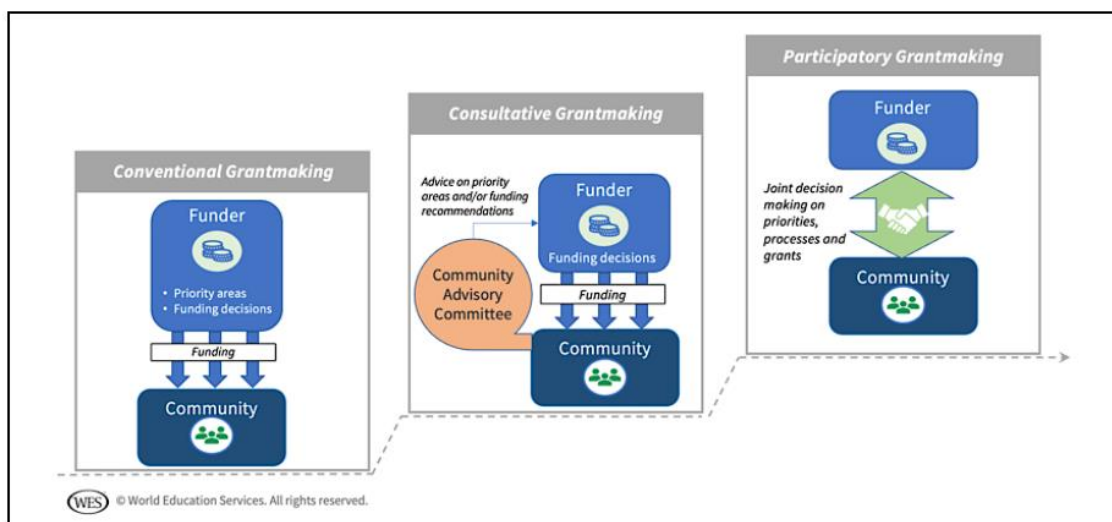
PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING IN PRACTICE: PEEL REGION'S EXPERIENCE

Source: Tamarack Institute's insights and learnings from a PGM pilot project that focused on building equitable economies for immigrants and refugees in the Peel Region (Ontario, Canada) in partnership with the WES Mariam Assefa Fund.

PGM processes are well documented in the many practical resources found in the literature. The first illustration continues the example above used by the Tamarack Institute for its two year PGM pilot in Ontario.

The grantmaking process is summarized below.

Figure 3: The Grantmaking Process

PREPARATION WORK
Panel members individually assessed 10 applications using an assessment matrix (this matrix utilized the priorities and criteria they developed at Stage 1)

ASSESSMENT
Using the assessment matrix, members placed applications in a ranked order and shared their rankings with their small group.

SHARING PERSPECTIVES
Members discussed in two small groups to identify areas of convergence and divergence over the ranking. Together, each group worked towards finalizing a short-list of the top 5 proposals they share with the large group.

2ND ROUND OF PREPARATION WORK
In-between sessions, panel members reviewed the top 5 proposals of the other group and ranked them alongside their own short-list. Tamarack used a weighing system to integrate all rankings prior to the second session to propose a short-list of 10 projects for discussion.

DECISION MAKING
Consensus was not immediately attained on a final selection, so the large group engaged in multiple rounds of discussion on each project based on the criteria. The panel reached consensus on 6 projects. A small sum of funding remained so the panel decided to add it to strengthen one of the project for greater impact.
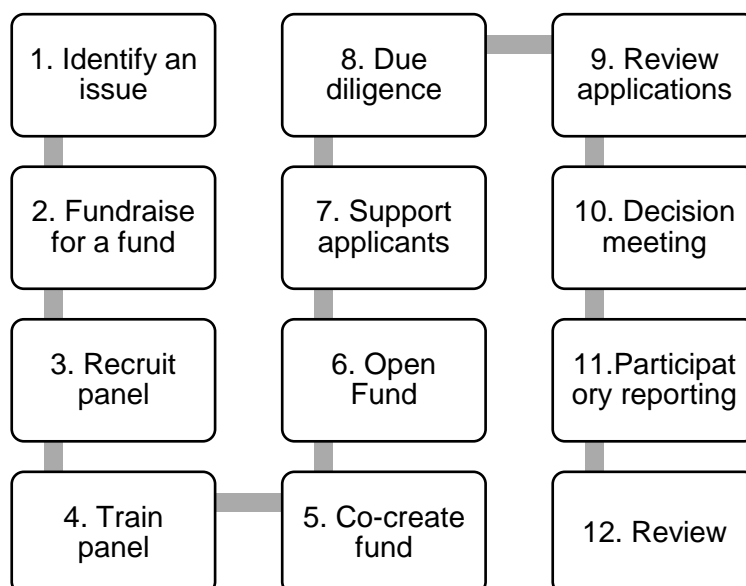
However, the example above is quite limited as, different guides and primers emphasise other elements of the process not reflected – for example, much greater preparatory work before the process of having panel members being in place to assess applications; all the activity to engage with communities in an authentic and non-extractive way, shaping the agenda and priorities as well as the significant work that is required to recruit the panellists and all the support that is required to create positive conditions for people to trust, learn and decide how to decide together. Similarly, other PGM process maps add many more activities beyond the decision making visual above, including ways in which panellists and PGM participants work together beyond the decision to award funds. We present below, by way of example, an abbreviated set of process flow diagrams from the Camden Giving Practical Ideas for PGM Toolkit.

Process example:

For a fund where the panel meet over a shorter period to award grants, typically taking a few months to award grants at one panel meeting.

In this example it should be noted that Camden Giving tends to have to fundraise rather than rely on an endowment. Foundations practicing PGM that we have spoken with during this study tend to have funding in place already and pilot PGM without that extra requirement to fundraise locally from businesses and other donors. *Please see the Camden Giving Toolkit for more precise timelines between processes.*

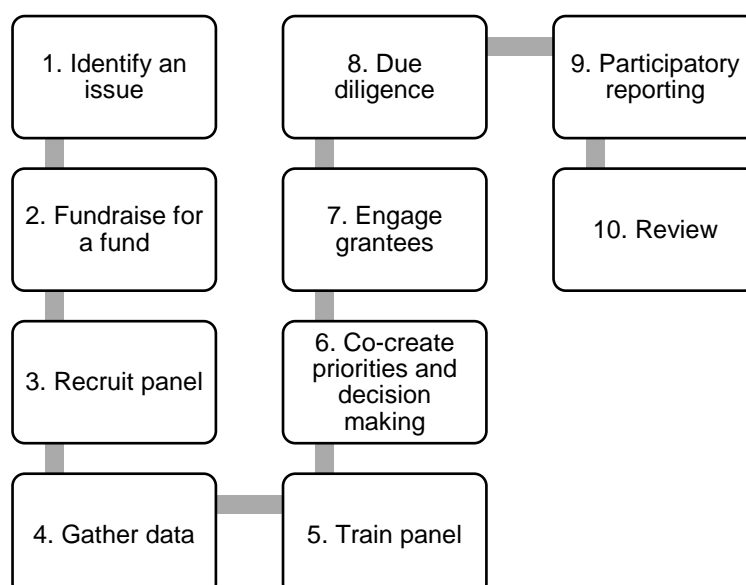| 1. Identify an issue | 8. Due diligence | 9. Review applications |
2. Fundraise for a fund	7. Support applicants	10. Decision meeting
3. Recruit panel	6. Open Fund	11. Participatory reporting
4. Train panel	5. Co-create fund	12. Review

Rolling Fund process example. For a fund that is open for the duration of the fund and where the panel meet more frequently to award grants the processes are the same as for the first example, but the time taken can be longer for some of the activities associated with each process, as can their frequency.

Process timeline 3: Non-Competitive Funding

For a non-competitive funding approach, the processes are slightly different to the other PGM fund examples.

This is also being referred to in Camden Giving as 'trust based funding.' and commands a great deal of additional learning for any funder thinking of this type of PGM in future. See their guide, page 17-19 and how this approach has been trialled to fund **local food provision**.

1. Identify an issue	8. Due diligence	9. Participatory reporting
2. Fundraise for a fund	7. Engage grantees	10. Review
3. Recruit panel	6. Co-create priorities and decision making	
4. Gather data	5. Train panel	

The illustration (right) is a visual representation of the grant application and decision making process publicised by 'York Deciding Together' in 2019. But there was also a huge amount of work before and after this part of the process was 'ready to go' out to the communities with.

All of the example illustrations in this chapter perhaps lack some of the detailed activity that appears to be required to create positive conditions for PGM – *indeed DDM, PDM or PRA* – to take root in a place or community of interest or identity for the longer term.

As such, we feel there are additional processes that need to be highlighted in this feasibility study for any reader to know the true extent of requirements to develop good PGM practices – particularly in the **preparatory and post-decision making** phases of activity. These additional processes were kindly shared with the consultant in the primary research phase of the project, which readers can review from insights shared in <mark>section 9.4.</mark>
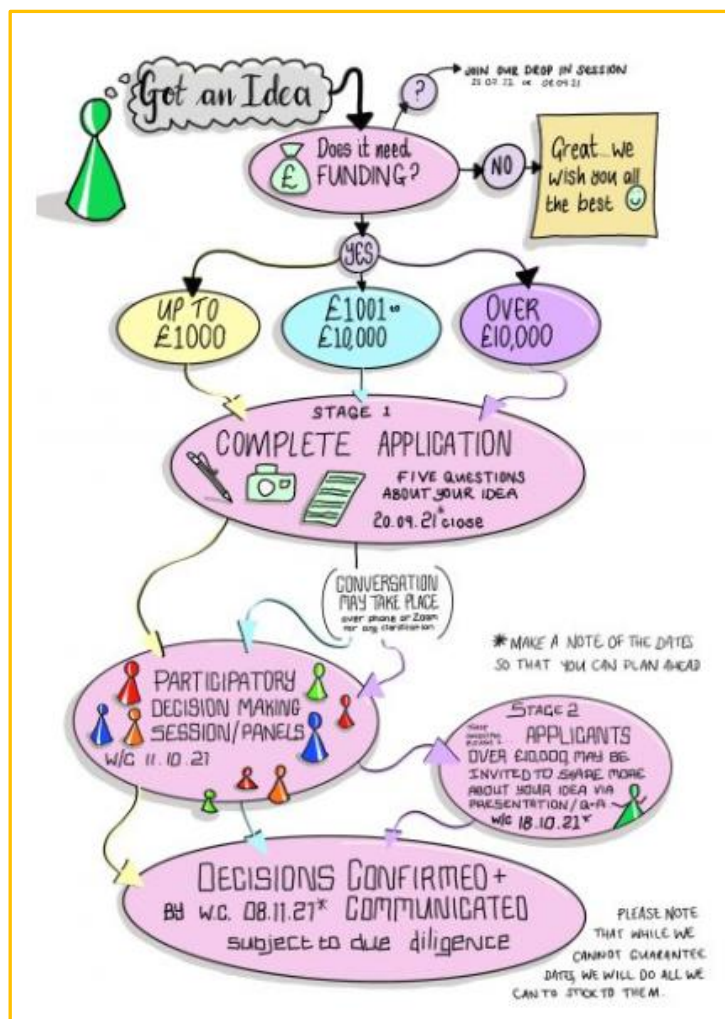
Summary: PGM models and decision making

There are multiple PGM models in practice including the size of community grants that are decided upon by 'community panellists' (ranging from less than £1,000 to £1.5 million in the case studies reviewed for this study).

The adoption of a PGM model differs in each context. No single model is evidentially more efficacious than another.

Evidence is mixed about decision making 'quality' with some published studies suggesting the best decisions and ideas emerge when both experts and 'real people' are involved in exploring them[47]; whilst others feel that the best decisions are made by those who have deep knowledge of the intersections of inequality and barriers which may not typically be held by traditional grantmakers.

8.0   Chapter 5: Situational analysis of PGM in North Yorkshire

This study has found past, current and planned PGM activity in North Yorkshire as follows:

Scarborough – there is a critical mass of place-based & thematic PGM activity here.

<u>Place based PGM:</u> **Barrowcliff** (Big Local). This has involved historic participatory approaches to decision making. Community grants have been made to align with pre-defined Big Local Outcomes[48]. Big Local will transition to become 'Active Communities Together'. The amount of planned PGM or PDM activity as that entity is currently unknown and undecided.

Past experiences and opinions of PGM
Big Local Barrowcliff

Big Local in Scarborough

"This has felt positive. Better than before. No people coming in with badges on telling people what to do."

"We made sure that we didn't wear our lanyards in Barrowcliff, or Council badge when with Big Local."

Grantmaking

Decisions are run by a panel with residents in the majority. There is a partnership with up to 15 residents involved in decision making about how money on projects is spent. No projects are means tested, anyone can take part e.g. a Free School Meal project in lockdown saw <u>every child (not just those eligible for FSM)</u> getting £3 vouchers in the area. This was decided by Big Local.

Legacy?

"Big Local is becoming Active Communities Together (ACT). 51 of 150 Big Locals across the country have signed up and 140+ residents have signed up locally. Come to a meeting, see how the legacy is being created."

Thoughts and questions

"How do people have control of the money?"

How is control passed over?"

Response: "We do a lot of funding that is open to anyone. We have a panel of residents with the majority of residents making decisions.'"

"It took 3 attempts to get the Big Local Barrowcliff partnership right."

"Learning from failure is almost as important as succeeding."

"We ask what do people want. People are good at telling you what they need. And it's OK to fail."

<u>Place based PGM:</u> **Historic participatory budgeting (but not currently happening).** The PGM learning together workshop added these insights.

Past experiences and opinions of PGM
Scarborough Participatory Budgeting

Using Scarborough BC grants, a **participatory budgeting** scheme had been pioneered some years ago with an aim to move decision making power from Councillors to local people.

"Decision making power moved from Councillors and Committee to the individuals / residents. Organisations would put forward their pitches and individuals / residents made decisions based on these."

This typically took the form of a 'Dragon's Den' style event with voting and scoring.

"It had good success across the Borough, hundreds of people got involved."

Legacy?

"It [PB] fizzled out because the Area Committees ceased, and the funding wasn't there any more."

There is nevertheless current PGM activity involved in the Eastfield PACT Regeneration Partnership's 'Cash for Causes' work programme area which sees a panel of 7 people (including 5 residents) awards small community grants. £100,000 of £150,000 pot has been allocated.

"It is good that residents are involved in decision making but it might be that the residents are ones who have strong opinions and possibly quite fixed."

Thoughts

"If we can do this kind of thing with grant making why can't we do it with local authority budgets?"

"I think PGM is a precursor to Participatory Budgeting."

"Gallows Close (a local trusted voluntary community organisation) is giving residents what they need now, not something that a politician says 5 years ago."

Place-based and thematic PGM: Scarborough, Whitby & Ryedale – Mental Health – Young People and Adults – a real mixture of PGM activity but managed by different systems and organisations that are not currently connected from a PGM practice perspective. The PGM learning together workshop added these insights for each example discovered.

Past experiences and opinions of PGM	
Mental Health and Wellbeing Thematic PGM	
Thematic (mental health) PGM	Until this learning together workshop, these different approaches and connections had not been made; each PGM activity is working in isolation of one another despite the commonalities of place and thematic intention. Perhaps this can lead to some practical joining up of know-how as a consequence of their workshop should the appetite to learn together continue in 2024?
Scarborough in particular appears to be the location where the most examples of PGM are currently found in North Yorkshire. Moreover, the theme of mental health and wellbeing appears to bind the different approaches we learned about.	
• There have been panels involving residents to help make decisions about which projects should get funding via the Community Mental Health Transformation activity (in Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale).	In the Teams and Dunston DDM approach, one of the first investments made was **mental health first aid training** for interested residents who would later in the process be expected to come together in a confident way to make decisions about community grants, some of which might be related to health and wellbeing.
• There has been a Young Persons Panel (involving young people that are already a part of the Youth Council and others that were not part of that Council) to help make decisions about how £25,000 of mental health funding (from Two Ridings Foundation and profiled by the Royals Foundation and visit in 2023).	
• And there are local panels involving residents making decisions about small grants funding in Scarborough via the National Lottery funded SEEChange Project.	

Past experiences and opinions of PGM	
Mental Health and Wellbeing Thematic PGM	
Comments	**Comments**
"I was blown away by the York Deciding Together stuff so when I had the chance in my role at the Foundation I brought together a panel of young people to make decisions on some available funding for projects that supported CYP mental health and wellbeing in Scarborough. They were a phenomenal bunch of young people – their integrity, passion and drive. I came in as the adult very process-focused and thinking 'this is what we need to do'. But on the day of decision making the young people took over, got on their feet, used flipcharts, pens, different colours – they brought questions about the community project applications we had brought to them for a decisions; they asked budget questions and what about value for money.	"I loved that children / young people were involved in the panel. The timing of meetings, done after school, and open to carers recognising their responsibilities. It worked hard to not exclude anyone. I wonder if in future it could also be an online decision making approach. Were any voices being missed because of the limiting aspect of cost and time for public transport from rural areas to get involved in the face to face decision making day?"
	Legacy?
	The Two Ridings Foundation's CYP mental health PGM activity is developing and in a second round of funding for 2024 the young people are shaping the criteria more for that.
	Thoughts
	"For the theme of mental health, the approach has to be built around **co-creation** within a service. A lot of work has gone in to this in TEWV and the NHS. PGM can be a part of that wider approach."

Thematic PGM in Scarborough only: Children and Young People's Mental Health – administered by the Two Ridings Foundation using donations and brought to public attention via a visit by Prince William and Princess Kate (The Royals Foundation) in November 2022). £25,000 of funding has thus far been decided by a small panel of young people and it is anticipated that further decision making will evolve as the longer-term endowment of £345,000 is dispersed over time. See comments from Two Ridings Foundation staff involved in this work above text with this symbol

Thematic PGM in Scarborough only: Mental health and wellbeing PGM forms part of the 3 year National lottery funded 'SeeCHANGE' Project. Insights above and below from the workshop.

Past experiences and opinions of PGM
Mental Health and Wellbeing Thematic PGM: SeeCHANGE Scarborough

SeeCHANGE is all about reducing inequalities and improving wellbeing in Scarborough. It's a £500k, 3-year National Lottery funded Project. It has a leadership team comprising NYC, NHS, Scarborough Business ambassadors and VCSE leadership as well as community engagement, small grants to grassroots groups (£30k in total for these). There has been one round of funding (May 2023) for projects up to £1,500. When community organisations expressed interest the SeeCHANGE Community Engagement Officer (Bex) made contact with the prospective applicant to talk through their idea, make suggestions and support with the completion of the form as needed. The forms were shared with the panel members. A panel was then held and applicants, accompanied by Bex, presented their idea.	After their presentations the panel would make comments and decide to fund or not. If there were issues Bex would feedback. If the applicant was successful but we felt there could be added value Bex would once again share this with the applicant and also support them with any other areas that might be needed as part of an ongoing relationship. The successful applicants were then invited to meet up for a cheque ceremony, talk to some of the SeeCHANGE team and discuss their thoughts about the process and also to share what their project was with other applicants. This aspect would build as more applicants were successful and a bit of a 'community' of groups could form to share and support each other. This was the first funding tranche and it was recognised there would be learning from it. Such as not to call it a panel since that sounds too formal and scary (feedback from two applicants).

Past experiences and opinions of PGM
Mental Health and Wellbeing Thematic PGM

Thoughts and experiences	
"We've done our first round of funding and some fantastic projects have been funded. The stand out is a project for non-neuro typical people – when the panel get together it's beautiful, that self-awareness coming from the ground up. It's a good job I'm not on the panel as I'd give them all money!" "I go to the community hubs to connect with people and tell them what's available." (Bex) "Through the SeeCHANGE panel Bex sat with every group through the process. We got together afterwards and asked the groups how they felt, what shared experiences they had." "It's been really great. The question is – how do we get to the next level? We've done our first round of funding and have funded fantastic work. It is really good to see how life has changed in a small amount of time for some people (For example, Ding Dong Bells Social Group) "The common link is geographical, by Beyond Housing accommodation. (Seamer)"	"A group of residents were feeling isolated and very lonely and have lived here for years. The initial engagement came from a Social Prescriber trying to get a community to come together. Ding dong bell. We have a social group!" What's the common denominator – they live in Seamer, they have association with Beyond Housing and there was a desire to focus more on isolation and the wellbeing *of people here.*" 'The panel was all 'professionals' including representation from the National Lottery who insisted that they were present for all panels. So, no community/residents doing the decision making.

Place-based and thematic PGM: Scarborough, Whitby & Ryedale – Mental Health as part of the Transforming Community Mental Health transformation programme. This work involves people with lived experience of mental ill health and a decision -making panel that has awarded a variety of projects typically into the local voluntary and community sector.

Three people with lived experience involved in this work from Ryedale attended the PGM learning together workshop and shared insights about this activity including this example from one of the participants and quotes below >>>

"A panel feels very us and them, whereas it needs to be 'we' . The process of the formation for the transforming community mental health work was slow, but you go through the process of getting together and knowing each other, which was a really important process to go on."

"PGM smashed my prejudices wide open. I've been on benefits for 20 years, suffered discrimination, poverty and trauma. People assume I don't know how to function."

Place-based PGM: Eastfield in Scarborough only. Cash for Causes (C4C)

[Eastfield Cash for Causes grant scheme | North Yorkshire Council](#)

Eastfield Cash For Causes was a device set up by Scarborough Borough Council a few years ago to manage the Section 106 money from the expansion of housing around Eastfield. It's a Council funded small grants scheme to support projects of community benefit in the community of Eastfield. A total pot of £150,000 has been drawn down over three years from Council monies acquired from the sale of land. Cash for Causes is one of six work programme areas that are overseen by the Eastfield Pact Regeneration Partnership that is in the process of delivering circa £5million of regeneration investment into the community. The other work programme areas are people, place, jobs / skills, aspiration and community hubs.

Cash for Causes allocates small grants under two strands: Micro grants of up to £1,000 with less rigid due diligence criteria and main grants of over £1,000 with no upper limit. Applications are welcomed from community organisations and private sector organisations if they can demonstrate the project is not for profit. Importantly applicants to C4C must be able to demonstrate a tangible local connection and projects must contribute to one of the five other work programme areas mentioned above.

Decisions on what gets funded and what does not rests with a panel of 7 people comprising 5 local residents and 2 stakeholders, drawn from a larger pool of about 25-30 residents and 8-10 stakeholders. Whilst the resident led panel ultimately decides what projects get funded they reach their decisions using a scoring framework aligned to the fund priorities. All panel members go through informal training before sitting on their first panel.

> *"Residents and professionals both receive the same Cash for Causes Briefing (training). This usually takes approx. 1 hour. The application guidance and application process is reviewed, and I (Council Officer) usually talk through each section of the application, along with the scoring criteria. I also go through the key PACT objectives to ensure they understand we are looking for their inclusion in any applications. There is also a discussion around what the aims are of the C4C panels and the importance to make fair decisions.*
>
> *Confidentiality is also emphasised as part of the process. Applications at the panel are not distributed to panel members and are read out to panel members (to minimise the risk of confidential information being removed from the room). I also talk about what match funding is and how this is viewed positively with applications where possible."*

The consultant asked Council Officers involved in C4C about the kind of people with lived experience / residents that have been motivated to get involved in decision making aspects of the scheme.

> *"There has been a mixed group of residents coming forward to support the panels. Recruitment often takes place following other community based activity or events. There has also been some interest from residents following publicity to recruit via social media. Residents Association members have been a good source of volunteers for the panel. 1:1 discussion with residents has been very productive in sourcing volunteers, usually at local events, meetings or partner organisations identifying people they think may be suitable. There are a total of 18 residents active on the resident panel and I email all when I am trying to organise a panel with three possible dates for a panel to ascertain availability. This approach usually means there is a good chance of having 5 residents per panel available and panellists vary from panel to panel. Motivation to get involved is hard to ascertain but those that do attend have said that they really enjoy having a say in what gets funded in their local area and that the panels and applications are really interesting."*

There aren't any set dates for funding rounds, applications can be received at any time. When there are two or more applications received, a panel is pulled together. Frequency is usually monthly to 6 weekly. To date just over two thirds of the total available pot (£112,000) has been allocated to 22 projects (of 48 applications received at time of this report). The remaining funds will likely be allocated within 2024 based on current application numbers. Subject to external evaluation of the scheme by June 2024, options for continuation of the scheme are being considered.

Other PGM / DDM activity identified in North Yorkshire is detailed below.

Thematic DDM: "Our Zero Selby". 'Funding from the National Lottery Community Fund has allowed 'Up for Yorkshire' to restart the Our Zero Selby project, meaning we can bring exciting new projects to Selby! These will be aimed at reducing carbon emissions of Selby, while also addressing issues of skills, jobs, fairness, health and wellbeing.

During the Pilot Phase of the project, residents were consulted and generated a list of 25 projects they wanted to see to improve Selby, from across 5 themes. These community-driven ideas will now guide future activities, rooting the project in the voices and aspirations of residents. We asked the community to share their ideas of what is good about Selby and what they may like to see changed or improved. We then took these ideas to a 3-day **Community Decision making event in March 2022**[49], in which the 101 initial ideas were refined into a set of **25 project ideas** that residents want to see in Selby, organised into 5 themes of **food, travel, nature, buildings we use and live in, and what we buy and waste**.'

'We invited 40 members of our community (reflective of Selby's local population in terms of their age, gender, educational qualification, ethnicity and where they lived), a group of regional stakeholders representing local businesses, local organisations, and councils' to the decision making event. The participants at the events learnt about climate change, **developed criteria** for what a good set of projects for Selby would look like, **went through all 101 ideas from the community and then prioritised 5 projects for each theme, for local action.**

What this achieved: The events resulted in a community-led vision, and practical action plan to reduce rising emissions in our town and show how the long-term benefits of a zero carbon Selby can be felt by everyone. By the end of the events, 97% of the participants reported feeling there is a lot that can be done to tackle climate change in their local area, while 69% believe that they are able to influence decisions that are made about their local area (up from 33% at the start of the process). More information about this participatory decision making approach is available in the Project's Impact Report[50].

Place-based DDM: Selby Big Local has historically employed participatory techniques to achieve pre-defined outcomes (see Barrowcliff example earlier). **Selby Big Local** is transitioning to a legacy structure called Our Space Selby CIO which will be opening and running the community building bought by Selby Big Local, and engaging residents in that process to ensure the building is theirs. It is not obvious how much PGM activity will happen yet whilst these arrangements take effect.

[The then] Selby District Council set up The Heart of Yorkshire, the Fund for the Selby District, with a two million pound donation to the Two Ridings Foundation. Following reorganisation, North Yorkshire Council has invested the money as an endowment fund. So, the Foundation can award the annual interest in grants to support local people to deliver activities in their community, year on year, forever. The fund aims to provide a long term, sustainable source of funding. It will support local charitable activity in the Selby District that meets the identified needs (linked to stated priorities). Selby District Council also made an initial donation of £100,000 for the first year of grantmaking. Eligible groups can apply for up to £2,000 all year round, funds allowing. It is unclear whether the decision making panel is operated using a PGM approach or not.

Place-based PGM: Harrogate. The Harrogate Local Fund[51] (also known as the Harrogate 'Lotto') has been made possible by a blend of funding including being able to spend the interest from capital money - (from [then] Harrogate Borough Council) given to the Two Ridings Foundation as an endowment – on grants. This extract from the 2023 Local Fund Impact Report confirms that: *'Panels making the decisions of The Local Fund are made up of local leaders, the council and local **people with direct experience** of the issues affecting communities in the district*[52]'. In 2023 £92,828 was awarded in 39 grants – with an average grant award of £2,380 - supporting 36 organisations. This was made up of two panels in February and September. The Lotto concept, an online local lottery, is a means of generating sustainable income that can raise funds for voluntary and community groups.

The Stronger Communities Team reflected on these models during the study and provided their thoughts on the relative potential of PGM in North Yorkshire at various intervals between June 2023 and January 2024. Key points were as follows:

- They were interested to learn more about PGM, and the models presented.
- Two team members have direct experience of supporting PGM activity in their communities and generously shared them throughout the study.
- One member of the team could identify a range of examples where the authority still makes decisions about funding linked to health inequalities and the prevention agenda but has incrementally involved people with lived experience in panels and decision-making processes. The authority retains the accountability.
- One member of the team had attended a York Deciding Together PGM learning lessons event and felt that the process was the outcome as much as, if not more than, the outcomes that you might get from the community projects that receive the money.
- One member of the team felt that whilst PGM would align directly with the vision for empowered communities and individuals with more agency and collective control, the authority is probably not free enough to 'let go' and felt that there are restrictions and a risk aversion that might make PGM more difficult to fully embrace than they might otherwise like.
- As a team there was agreement that PGM might offer a broad range of benefits helping build relationships, trust, connection and empowerment but that it would present a range of challenges to the local authority and the best role it could play.

One team member kindly provided this helpful set of reflections based on a peer review process:

Why use Participatory Grantmaking? There is general agreement around why funders want to do PGM. They are inspired by wanting to do things differently believing that the people closest to the issue are best placed to solve the issue. "The best people to make decisions are those closest to the community - particularly those that are marginalised or suffering poverty". There is an intentional desire by the funders to try and bring the 'margins into the centre of decision making' realising that often, *London based funders* parachute into an area and wrongly believing that their money can create long lasting change to those who would benefit most. Funding a successful PGM model would be a confirmation and validation of the fact that people are resourceful and have strengths and that relationships should lead to more than outcomes. PGM would be about more than the impact of the money given out: 'We were testing the idea that the legacy is the relationship after the money dries up.' 'The success of PGM is relationships and journeys not just the money moved." "PGM can provide financial, economic mobilisation of previously marginalised individuals.'

Why does power matter in PGM? There is a clear belief that PGM means as a minimum for a funder to share its power but ideally it is about letting go of power and the associated outcomes to someone else and stepping back entirely. There is a need for the grant giver to understand that and be able to step back and allow the process to unfold. If there are any restrictions and parameters these need to be shared before the process starts so that they can be incorporated into the factors affecting the decision making of the group. 'With desire to devolve power, better things will happen.'

What issues will be addressed? Addressing things that matter to people – delegating decision making through self-selection according to where people wish to focus their energy. PGM brings together a group of people with different attitudes cross-sector and with different attitudes who are not representatives of large charities. Having people with lived experience in setting priorities is crucial. PGM key features are around voice, decision making, accountability, capacity building, power and learning. Foundations and local authority perspectives appear to be aligned around the ideal that PGM could support their ambitions for building community capacity and creating community leadership.

PGM as a process? The idea of PGM as a process does divide opinion slightly, while everyone agreed that involving people in the design and dissemination of resource was essential, some saw the process 'as important as the outcome for the people involved' while for others PGM requires more fluidity, emotions, and relationships more than process.

What is needed to support successful PGM? Feedback from those involved in PGM felt that there needs to be a 'weaver' or someone with great relationship skills, strong facilitation, ability to nurture participants confidence while developing the process and keeping people safe. PGM also needs to establish a timeline that is adopted by all involved in the project. This is ideally visual and broken into phases to stop it being overwhelming. Do it quietly and ideally do it small then there is less pressure on the group. PGM uses a range of tools to work the process through, which tools are used will depend to some extent on the group, what they are aiming to do, how they are working together, the knowledge within the group and what they want to learn. Tools that have been used include the 8 breaths approach, the 9 behaviours/money accountability training and Deep democracy.

Coming together as PGM participants. It was felt by PGM participants that it is easier to do PGM if there is already a pre-existing community of interest otherwise there will need to be built into the process plenty of coming-together time in order to build trust within the group. "The YDT process was very slow, that formation and facilitation that held the space well. By the time the people were making decisions together they had gone through time to get to know each other – time and effort." The reasons of residents getting involved in PGM are more likely due to feeling there is an opportunity for personal growth, curiosity, and/or out of a sense of local/social injustice and desire to create change around something they care about or have experienced in their life. Overall, it takes more time to do PGM than other grant giving models, but the benefit of PGM is that it changes behaviour potentially in a system where there is frustration that disadvantage is perpetuated.

Other team members shared thoughts in January 2024 after the PGM learning together workshop and added:

- Their desire to learn more about the 'Trinoculars' learning and DDM approach used in Teams and Dunston inspired by The Relationships Project
- The experience that sometimes the voice of people with lived experience is 'too strong' in so far as it can be disruptive to other participants seeking to make contributions at meetings
- There appears to be a danger even with PGM to just replicate a system we might be trying to replace or improve upon so there's a need for strong 'first principles' with PGM
- Based on Big Local experiences it is hard to achieve (representative) community voice
- Lived experience has mixed benefit, you can have two people with similar experiences e.g. struggling to cope but their voices can be condemnatory of each other making consensus difficult and awkward. There is still bias in the room just different sets of biases and fissures can be expanded rather than brought together. PGM though could provide the space, time and conditions to be 'deeper'
- This study is surfacing a wider debate about the role of the expert in society and shift to the voice of the people who have lived expertise which provides tension and opportunity
- This PGM study is a good complement to the learning that some NYC officers are receiving and sharing around IVAR's open and trusting grant-giving principles
- PGM feels very different to the way the local authority currently organises community grants which typically involves officer-based decisions or small panels (*some with PWLE*)
- PGM with young people has real potential and is an exciting proposition to explore.
- NYC would need to ask: 'How OK are we with risk, giving up control, ceding power and enabling grants with no conditions despite having to account for every penny in all we do?'

Summary – PGM in North Yorkshire

There is a critical mass of place based and thematic PGM happening in Scarborough as well as Ryedale linked to (mental) health and wellbeing and young people. A range of panels exist where to a lesser or greater degree decision making roles and power is shifting so that residents have a greater say in how money is spent.

The extent to which they are also shaping the priorities, goals or strategy is less evident and offers room for learning and improvement in future by connecting the various practices and 'actors' together. Interestingly, these are the most common PGM themes found to be the focus for philanthropic organisations practising PGM in the UK as well. See extract below this box.

There is also a mature and well-funded PGM approach in York initiated in 2021 that offers many opportunities for learning between and amongst the neighbouring local authorities, Two Ridings Foundation and people with lived experience involved in 'York Together' (legacy structure responsible for devolving further Lankelly Chase monies in the city). The Joseph Rowntree Foundation is also active in York with plans for more PGM in future and is collaborating with TRF on Cost of Living PGM approaches.

Models of funding including monies provided to the Two Ridings Foundation as an endowment from which any interest gained can be spent on community grants, as well as local lottos, provide another potential fertile ground for PGM empowering approaches in future; moreover, a sustainable means of generating income to raise funds to meet community needs longer-term. These models should be explored further through collaborative discussions between interested parties (see recommendations).

Other examples of PGM and PDM are found in Harrogate and Selby.

There may be other PGM examples beyond what has been discovered and it is hoped that the Yorkshire Funders Network can be canvassed in 2024 to add to this list. Furthermore, the Localities Team in North Yorkshire Council is bringing all the grants scheme together after May 2024 from legacy Councils. This may reveal a) further examples of PGM historically involved and b) the potential for exploring PGM in any re-designed approach to community grants and associated comprehensive offer to VCS (see recommendations).

There are examples of lived experience and lived expertise being brought into pre-existing decision making panels / boards / committees / groups (by North Yorkshire Council), but this has not been described by contributors as intentional PGM and so has not been included in this study.

The Stronger Communities Team have curiosity and interest in PGM recognising both the benefits and challenges involved. As one team member reflected: "I am ready for PGM, because it's fraught with problems, there's no clear way of doing it, it's contradictory but it's exciting!"
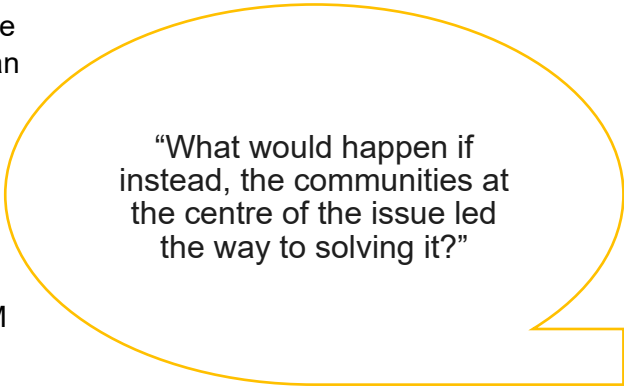
UK Landscape Mapping Survey, February 2023: The research found that the most common areas of funding for organisations that practice PGM are **young people, health, racial justice/inequality and poverty/social justice**. For organisations that deliver more than 50% of their funding through PGM the most common areas were **health, racial justice/inequality and disability** followed by **young people** and **poverty/social justice** whilst organisations that deliver less than 50% through PGM the most common areas are **young people** and **health.**

9.0   Chapter 6: Primary research findings including learning lessons

This section draws on responses from 40 individuals interviewed either one-to-one, in small groups and / or at the PGM learning together workshop delivered as part of this study.

9.1   The drivers and motivations for Participatory Grantmaking

Traditionally, grantmaking is a top-down process. The grantmaker sets out a theory of change to address an issue, solicits proposals for solutions, and picks grantees from among the submitted proposals. Even with the best intentions, this process, some argue, is not only insufficient, it's backward. In essence, the communities closest to the issue are responding to funders' ideas for solving it, with their voices largely excluded from the decision. PGM asks instead.>>>

"What would happen if instead, the communities at the centre of the issue led the way to solving it?"
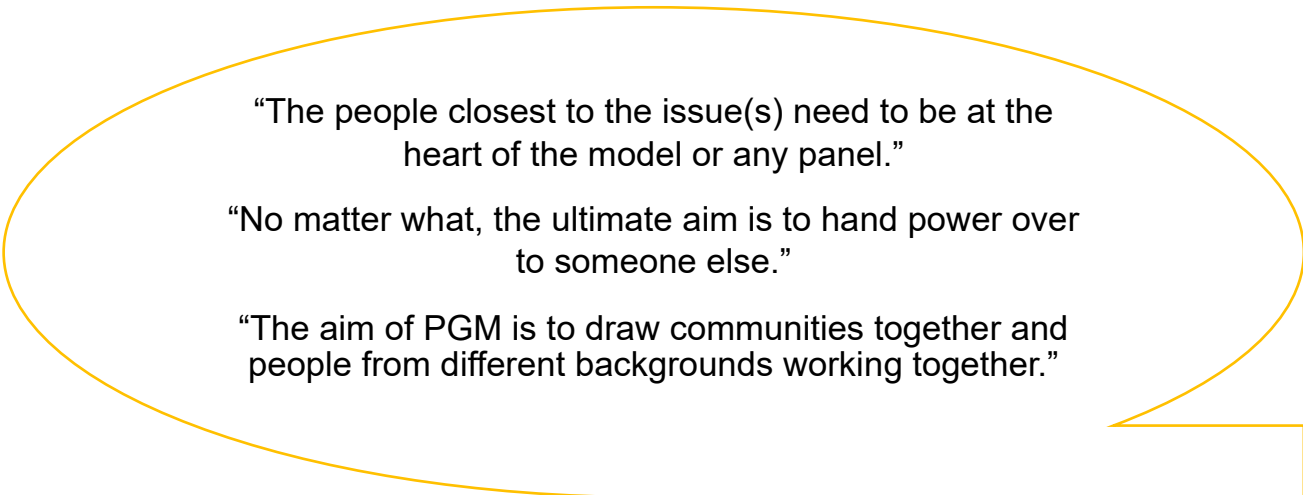
Research by The National Lottery (Hannah Peterson) identified these drivers for PGM amongst philanthropic organisations choosing to do it as part of their giving practices. **External drivers**:

- Disenfranchisement.
- Responding to critics of philanthropy.
- Transparency of philanthropy.
- Increasing diversity.

Internal drivers:

- Supporting the good stuff not the good bid writers.
- Devolving power to communities.
- The awakening of funders to movements.
  Improving practice.
- Improve 'our' knowledge.
- Strengthen the (philanthropy) sector.

- Fund areas and communities we have struggled to fund in the past.
- Achieve some of diversity, equality and inclusion ambitions.
- Build trust, relationship and transparency.
- Increase a foundation's profile and reputation.

Interviews completed for this North Yorkshire feasibility study found a range of complementary drivers for PGM linked to beliefs about what is right, just and positive for people in communities.

"The people closest to the issue(s) need to be at the heart of the model or any panel."

"No matter what, the ultimate aim is to hand power over to someone else."

"The aim of PGM is to draw communities together and people from different backgrounds working together."

Here are some other reasons for piloting and investing in PGM given in respondents' own words.

The drivers relate strongly to addressing power imbalances and enabling shared journeys and experiences for people who have not traditionally been trusted or equipped to make decisions.

"The best people to make decisions are those closest to the community - particularly those that are marginalised or suffering poverty."

National place-based funder perspective

'Lankelly Chase had an agenda to try and create change to the things that perpetuate a system that creates multiple disadvantage. Our PGM journey started in 2017/18. The Trustees felt unmoored from the grants they were deciding about and what the grants were doing so they devolved the decision making to the Lankelly Chase Staff Team; who similarly went on to feel that the decisions should be made by people closest to it. We went on an intentional journey of losing control. "It was also our realisation that the mechanism of cause and effect – if you do this thing then that thing will happen– is not how things work….in systems, in communities. So for us at the time the driver in part was our **re-imagining of outcomes and solutions** too.'

'PGM is about involving people in the design and dissemination of resource and money. It's not about being locked in a room with well-paid people from the voluntary sector. It was looking to bring in different people, build trust, relationships and provide mechanisms for listening – things I took for granted before the process began. If these aren't in place it's really difficult for people to reach a position personally where they can make decisions. People otherwise fear – or are doubtful – that they have control, and someone might swoop in and over-ride everything or challenge them. We wanted to test the belief that *the people closest to the issue are best placed to solve the issue.*

'We were also seeking confirmation and validation of the fact that people are resourceful and have strengths and that relationships should lead to more than outcomes; and that when people come together they can scratch a collective itch. There was also an ick about us in our ivory tower in London making decisions and it didn't feel right. We were testing the idea that the legacy is the relationships after the money dries up.'

Lankelly Chase is supporting Devolved Decision Making, Participatory Resource allocation and PGM approaches in multiple cities including York, Teams and Dunston (see below), Greater Manchester, Oxford and Barking and Dagenham.

Spotlight on Gateshead

In Teams and Dunston, Gateshead, there was interest in devolved decision making. A local social enterprise – Collective Impact Agency (CIA) - and Lankelly Chase were heavily involved in Gateshead and with the local authority in finding different ways with community and doing 'what's right for the community'. DDM was driven by the local authority who were recognising that they were all working in silos and departments and asking the same people in the same communities 'tell us your problem'. It was felt that there should be a combined attempt to support individuals.

'For the Balinger Charitable Trust, meantime, when CIA said they thought a new approach might work the Board thought it was an interesting experiment and if the National Lottery were willing to invest in the community development 'bit' and Lankelly Chase would put up the major funding (£115,000) the Trust were OK to hold Lottery money and add in £15,000 to the pot so long as that bit was into the hands of the community and them deciding what to spend it on – not the overheads / community development costs of the staff at CIA doing that work up-front'.

'We were always trying to make the community stronger – strengthen connections and relationships. **This was an experiment** – an exercise in learning about devolved decision making – the idea of sub-devolving money in to a smaller locality than 'Gateshead' – into Teams and Dunston was novel and getting to the point where local people could decide what to do with money.'

Foundation perspectives

'Our two PGM pilots were about pursuing a more equitable distribution of funding by the Foundation a) into place based organisations deemed in cold spots that didn't typically apply to us for funding and b) organisations currently under-represented in the overall distribution of our funding. It's part of our aim to learn how to reach into our communities, and to find the best way to get grants to people who most need it or for who the issues are about. **We want to reach community leaders**. The interesting thing to see is whether a PGM panel in an area gives say £100k to the same or different organisations in the place / community of interest compared to how our Foundation's professional staff would have given the funding too anyway. If it's the same organisations, then PGM hasn't worked.'

'Our Foundation was trying to embed PGM with its Board's thinking for the future. We were trying to do more and better of what we'd been fumbling around with but needed to create the right circumstance. Our instinct as grantmakers was that PGM would be the right way to make grants. It's not innovative it's just good grantmaking. The reason we did PGM was knowing that solutions to inequalities and system breakdown are with people closest to suffering the consequences of it.'

'Our Foundation has a new Chief Executive and that heralded a new strategy and approach along with agreement from our Board to devolve power especially with young people and centring their needs. This led to visioning days with 100 young people, priorities emerging from that and then the recruitment of 7 young people to the 'Collective' who have made decisions to distribute £1.5 million to organisations they feel will meet the needs of more young people. This started with the **Trustees' willingness to devolve decision making power to young people**. We had asked the Board how much power they were willing to give away. They felt comfortable with this though there were lots of discussions about risk. There had previously been a Youth Advisory Group but that was more asking those young people 'here's a set of decisions we the adults are thinking of making - are they OK? rather than PGM which is intentionally saying 'here are decisions that you are going to make. We didn't want this to be an extractive process.'

Lived experience perspectives

We heard from residents about the reasons they chose to get involved with PGM. Motivations vary from individuals feeling there is an opportunity for personal growth, to satisfy their curiosity about something novel, and/or out of a sense of local/social injustice and desire to create change around something they care about or have experienced in their life.

"PGM is a liberation from authority and hierarchy."

"PGM can help reach the seldom heard hard to reach voices."

"What's needed is a bit of trust, in fact radical trust for PGM to work."

Explore here some of the reasons **young people** decided to join the Cooperative Foundation's 'Collective' responsible for deciding about how £1.5 million of funding could be allocated to meet young people's needs: Catching up with two of our Future Communities Collective - Co-op Foundation (coopfoundation.org.uk)

9.2 Why is PGM done thematically and / or in certain places or communities?

From the examples reviewed for this feasibility study, the reasons for different geographical places becoming the locus for PGM – or in some instances DDM – vary as follows:

York Deciding Together (2019 was the main year for the PGM activity)

Lankelly Chase had driven the agenda for York as one of a number of locations in the UK where their **place-based investment was quite mature**, plus they enjoyed a good relationship with Two Ridings Foundation where their CEO was fully on board with PGM and DDM direction. It was felt to be novel for York at the time (2019) and was following on from earlier (two years') investment in creating the conditions for what became known as the York Multiple Complex Needs (MCN) Network. The MCN was engaging with people who hadn't had this kind of opportunity or experience to come together before in this way.

Teams & Dunston (DDM – with 2021 to 2023 acting as an 18-month focused period for activity)

'Teams & Dunston is an area of deprivation; also divided by a main road with underpass structures, so physical things that divide the community. It's a splintered community. There are people in difficult circumstances. There's a half way home for people coming out of prison; there's addiction-supported housing; it's fragmented and divided as a community. A river is also a physical boundary and on one side is a new development with housing lived in by young professionals, arty, nice local café (the Staiths Café). One of the people at the CIA lived there so **we felt we knew the area well** so we (at the Trust) thought it might work better because of that local insight. Important in all this was the work of a local lady who was of the area and doing the community development work. She knew everyone. So why T&D? Because of the mix of disadvantage and deprivation punctuating the place and the benefit of having the local insight of people proposing the work. This gave the Board enough reassurance to invest and experiment.'

> *'T&D was selected because of highest suicide rates in men; generational unemployment; low literacy levels and specifically there are 'lay lines on the map, unwritten, but there, where people from one part won't talk to a person from another part'. There are 35 languages in the area; refugees, asylum seekers. North of West Street wouldn't talk to South of West Street.'*

Other UK locations supported by Lankelly Chase (no specific start point, varies per location[53])

'Our 'place places' weren't really chosen in the sense of picking the top 5 from the deprivation index list or anything like that. They were places where '**something was happening'**- usually involving people from "across the system" which in our old language normally meant people in a Local Authority trying to use a **systems change lens** on the work they were doing so that was our entry point.'

Scarborough Young People Mental Health PGM (2023 onwards)

'Before the Royals Visit in November 2022[54] the Two Ridings Foundation had made some small grants valuing £50k and young people have been involved with this. Two of our staff facilitated this and we pitched this to the Royals and introduced them to the young people – teenagers, a mixed cohort, not 'classic youth panel middle class private school' participants'. The Royals Foundation visited Scarborough as part of their new 'impact day blueprint' to bring profile and visibility to the issue of mental health. There were Two Ridings Foundation large donor contributions needing to do some PGM via a youth panel, so this created the conditions for doing something further, thematic and with young people in Scarborough.'

Tyne and Wear and Northumberland

Community Foundation Tyne and Wear selected Sunderland and BAME two-year pilots from 2023 because they wanted to reach a place / community of interest traditionally under-represented in their funding distribution. The pilots were selected by the Foundation following a year's worth of research first into PGM by their Head of Grants."

Cooperative Foundation (2022 onwards)

There was an organisational drive to focus on devolving power and decision making to young people as part of its new ['Building communities of the future together'](#) strategy. Since then the Foundation has launched, in November 2022, its £1.5m Future Communities Fund 'pioneering a distinctly co-operative way of funding with the Fund being intentionally participatory. This means that the grant-giving is led by their [Future Communities Collective](#), a group of diverse[55] young people who advise on the Foundation's funding and strategy.

'Try to ensure that PGM is beneficiary-led because otherwise there's a danger in allowing one's professional view of an area to drive it's selection, so just make sure the approach involves going to a community to 'tell us' what the issues are. The idea of going to places where there is energy and activism is quite appealing as a suggestion, more appealing than simply going to a coastal community because of its deficits only.'

9.3   What are the preconditions for PGM to likely be more effective?

Taken together, respondents' insights suggest PGM isn't a process you simply launch in a community because you decide it's a good thing. Neither is it about 'just going into a place with a bag of money' though **there does need to be money for a PGM process** owing to money – and who decides on how it is spent - still being regarded as a tangible proxy for power. A range of enabling conditions appear to support the likelihood of PGM being something that takes root in a place or community of interest including combinations of:

Time: though there are divergent views about how long is needed for preparatory work

> 'PGM takes longer because you have to recruit people, they have to get comfortable with each other, comfortable making decisions and then make grants. You can do 'it' in 12 months with 6 months to get a panel in place and the second part of the year to do some grantmaking.'

'Before the PGM activity in York was reviewed in 2023, there had been 5 years of pre work, and 2 years before the York Deciding Together PGM activity happened in 2019. There was a ripe seabed from which to grow PGM that pre-existed including the MCN, cultural values work by the MCN, systems thinking training, and deep democracy approaches meaning there were opportunities for people with lived experience to engage in different ways, splinter off to things they were interested and curious about.'

Capacity of the grantmaker (in this instance based on the experience of a Foundation)

'PGM requires more around fluidity, emotions and relationships; more than process. In an ideal process you'd have a good grantmaker keeping things tickety boo, but you need someone with great relationship skills nurturing and developing the process (a facilitator / a 'weaver[56]') and keeping people safe, you need that in parallel. If you were pitching a grants programme to a donor you would pitch 15% for costs to administer as a Foundation, but for PGM you would go 25%. Not all that money is going to the front line, it's for capacity.'

Allies able to reach networks of people with lived experience

'There were contacts in York willing to support the engagement approach i.e., to share the PGM invitation (York Deciding Together) with people in their communities – from the Council, health, the Lottery and faith groups. They helped us reach out and form 3 group structures.'

'The key enabler of PGM is relationships – at every part of its approach.'

A different mindset to non-participatory grantmaking

'For PGM everyone – particularly funders – need a different perspective on risk. If a grant goes wrong because it doesn't work it's a new learning experience. You also need a long term mind-set and endowment funds do have long-termism.'

'Most funders are still in the project mind-set with clear timeframe, outputs, evaluate, measure' cycles embedded. But this doesn't work so well for this kind of community working so making sure some of this attitudinal shift is in place ready for PGM can help.'

Different voices and attitudes

'It can help if there is already a group of people, cross-sector and with different attitudes before you start a PGM process. And if there is an intentional desire to try and bring the people from the 'margins into the centre of decision making' it helps by not having citizens on panels that are representatives of large charities.'

Someone willing to enable training and learning to support people wanting to get involved

'Space, training and doors opened by the right people.'

'There is a requirement in PGM – and DDM - for people of the community that choose to get involved to share experiences and build relationships. So training or learning can be helpful, for example about the relationship of feelings of accountability towards money when making decisions – almost a need to unlearn this for some people. We offer a 2-day 'Money Workshop' by Tim Mcinrick: An introduction to the Money workshop. This is a kind of starter pack that we (Lankelly Chase) designed and brought to an area but not every area wants it. York didn't want to work that way for example, but someone has to have these kinds of resources or options available.'

'For PGM you need space for developing knowledge, skills and experience.'

9.4　Insights about governance, structures and processes that can work

"The process is as important as the outcome for the people involved."

As has become evident in this study, each example of PGM appears to differ in its approach whilst retaining one common element of having people making a decision about how to spend available funding on community grants. Almost every other element of the process is variable, depending on the goals of the grantmaking programme, the context and the mix of stakeholders involved. Taken together, the depth interviews illuminate the following processes:

1: Community Engagement and Invitation

Examples of particular processes that have been used include:

- Use of the 8 breaths model (see Appendix 3) and inspiration from relevant work (e.g., Hannah Patterson's work) to engage the community.
- Clear and well-defined invitations to potential participants.

2: Recruitment and power mapping

Examples of particular processes that have been used include:

- Support from external facilitators (e.g., The Art of Hosting) to assist in recruitment.
- Power mapping to identify and engage stakeholders from various contexts (e.g. MCN, local authority services - youth work, housing, faith, health, LGBTQ+, business) within the community.

3: Building decision making capability

Examples of particular processes that have been used include:

- Use of the 8 breaths approach in every session to build participants' confidence in making decisions starting with getting used to small decisions leading to bigger decisions.
- Gradual progression from smaller decisions to larger community award decisions.

4: Funding allocation and anonymity of applications

- Funding allocation determined by a community panel.
- Allocation of funding based on specific criteria that align with community priorities.
- Grant applications anonymised to minimise bias during the review process.
- Choice in how to make decisions e.g. in past PB approaches in Scarborough and some Big Local areas a Dragon's Den style voting grant decision making process was reported to have worked well, but in Teams and Dunston, the approach purposely avoided this as it was felt to be 'gimmicky'.

'We didn't create a single panel and invite people to bid. Instead we built on pre-existing discrete community groups and the way they developed ideas together.'

5: Capacity building

Examples of particular processes that have been used include:

- Investment in capacity building for participants and the community to enhance their understanding of the PGM process – investment in people's time to come together, learn, visualise, imagine – not just do some decision making.

6: Collective decision making

Examples of particular processes that have been used include:

- Formation of a decision making panel comprised of community members who collectively make funding decisions. The type of panel was an important choice decided together e.g. whether to form a closed collective (as in York) or alternative model (see section 4.0)
- Flexibility in the governance structure, allowing for adjustments based on local preferences and experiences.

What works – PGM practices and processes?

- **Community-centred approach:** Engagement with the community at various levels, including reaching out to community members where they congregate. Focusing on what matters to the community, such as community centres and local pubs.
- **Use of external resources:** Use of external resources and guidance, such as websites, blogs, and literature from organisations like Participatory Grant Makers and Hannah Patterson's work aimed at helping participants come together and 'create space'.
- **Diverse funding models:** Adaptation of different PGM models based on local preferences, such as avoiding a panel-based approach when not well-received by the community.
- **Consensus-based decision making:** Emphasis on achieving consensus during the decision making process, with fall-back mechanisms for cases where consensus is not possible.
- **Independent adult advisors:** The presence of adult advisors who do not express opinions but are available to provide due diligence advice to maintain fairness (for example in the Young People PGM panels we observed)
- **Transparency and equity:** Efforts to maintain transparency and ensure equity in the allocation of funds, considering factors like the size and income of organisations applying for grants.
- **Learning and reflection:** Recording and documenting the learning experiences throughout the process (e.g. through Blogs after each session – see York Deciding Together examples found online). Encouraging reflection on the process itself, considering it as important as the outcomes.

Taken together these insights highlight the importance of **flexibility, community engagement, and transparency** in the successful implementation of Participatory Grantmaking. Additionally, the use of external resources and capacity-building efforts play a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of the PGM approach. There are a few aspects of the overall process we would like to highlight in more depth owing to the amount said about these in the interviews or the learning workshop.

Firstly, <u>the preparatory work</u>. Long before any decision making about money is made, PGM programmes appear to take different approaches to preparing the groundwork for people with lived experience to confidently participate in the tasks involved.

In all examples reviewed there has been an **originator** for the PGM pilots and programmes that have emerged. This is typically an organisation whose Board or other employed, professional people that hold power, money or other resources reflect that they are remote from the area or people affected by the decisions that they are making; and / or see the benefit of becoming increasingly participatory in their existing approaches. They decide if and how much of those assets they are prepared to devolve. How much are they prepared to let go of organisationally, to enable those much closer or closest to the issues any grantmaking is seeking to affect to take part in the shaping of strategy and criteria for decisions about funding?

What works – making the original case for investment in a PGM approach?

- For Lankelly Chase, an independent charitable foundation and network, **Board discussions** were sufficient to support a vision to devolve their power and assets (£multiple millions) over time, to places across the UK that would seek to 'change systems of injustice and oppression that result in the mental distress, violence and destitution of people subject to marginalisation in the UK'. They saw DDM, PGM and PRA as tools to work with others in places to shift patterns of perspectives, power, and participation.
- For one Community Foundation, the catalyst for their Board agreeing to fund two 2-year PGM pilots in their area of benefit (c£250,000) was their **Head of Grants doing their own research** about PGM for a year before producing a case for investment. The paper required a clear rationale for PGM, and it was proposed as being a mechanism that could potentially help achieve a more equitable distribution of their funds to either locations or communities of interest that traditionally did not apply for funding.
- For a PGM project that required a blend of investment from a Foundation, a charitable trust and the National Lottery (c£205,000) a mix of **discussion, persuasion and formal proposal** writing was required to enable a community pot of money and resource to pay for community engagement and development to be available before any residents were engaged.
- For another Foundation their Board agreed to use a small proportion of their endowment to **'experiment'** with PGM in order to learn about how to become more participatory.

The Camden Giving PGM practical toolkit provides other useful examples relating to these initial processes of locating the power and funding sources – including fundraising – to enable the resources that will as a minimum be required for a PGM process. The fund itself for people to decide how to spend and the resources required to manage the accountability aspects of the grantmaking as well as resources to fund the capacity building associated with PGM.

Community engagement and development

There were diverse examples once again about how different PGM programmes decided if and how to engage with a community (of place or interest/identify) as part of the pathway to recruiting a panel of people who would ultimately make decisions together.

In two examples we reviewed in-depth, they both employed and paid for an expert communicator, with superb relational skills to have conversations in communities and / or find ways of engaging with people who perhaps might not traditionally be heard or get involved in grantmaking or decision making activities. These roles have been described variably as 'community developer', 'facilitator' and more recently 'community weaver'. The feedback about these individual talented women has been unanimously positive. Without their role, it was argued by funders and people with lived experience (PWLE) alike that the processes would not have been as enjoyable, engaging or successful.

What works – community engagement and facilitation?

- A paid facilitation role, filled by someone with excellent relational skills and creativity.
- That facilitator having self-awareness of their own biases and having those biases usefully challenged by someone else in the PGM programme otherwise the facilitator can unconsciously make decisions about what approach works best for the communities they are trying to involve.

How much time is needed for PGM to work?

Interestingly, the people that took these roles on in different locations in the North of England had different attitudes towards the amount of time it should take to engage with communities as part of the recruitment process for a panel or equivalent structure as agreed locally. This study has heard wider opinions about this topic too.

The shortest timeframe suggested as being possible for a PGM process that successfully engages a community panel that fulfils solely the task of decision making to award a fairly traditional approach to assessing community grant applications is 6 months – but this would necessarily mean engaging an 'engaged group of people' that know and trust each other already; and that perhaps have experience of making decisions together whether about money or something else. This timeframe would not allow for the fuller definition of PGM to be satisfied as it doesn't enable enough time for people to shape strategy, priorities, goals or criteria for a PGM programme, it is more likely a process to enable at least one panel meeting to award some funds from an available pot of money.

For organisations that had experience, and the advantage of working either in a location or with a community of interest / affinity that had already been happening for c1-2 years in advance of a PGM programme being trialled, they would suggest it is possible to complete a satisfactory process within a 12 month period. In this instance too though, there would already be in place a talented facilitator to nurture those that choose to participate and have a range of tools and support available to draw on so that everyone involved had opportunity to learn together, choose the type of learning they wanted to do together, work out how to decide things as well as shape the PGM model they felt might work well for their context. In these circumstances, there is space to do some shaping of the criteria and fund award levels. The community panellists might be a mix of people that had come forward in the 1-2 year pre-PGM context to know each other and therefore feel more comfortable deciding to get involved in something new together like PGM, but it is also sufficient time to bring in new voices, attitudes and personalities as well.

Those who subscribe to the idea that PGM is only PGM if the full definition is satisfied and that it is not only about awarding money but to build agency, relationships and connections for the people (with lived experience) that elect to get involved, they feel a much longer time period is required before the decision making aspect of the PGM programme advising 18 months to 2 years minimum for the community engagement and involvement preparatory work; and then a further period of a year for the decision making aspects to be owned by whatever PGM model / collective / panel is selected by participants. In this circumstance, study respondents recommended that to go into any new place / community without prior experience of making decisions together a 3-year period as a minimum should be considered. In fact they go further to say that to not have this longer timeframe in mind could ultimately create more damage on what they feel is a broken, oppressive system already and that short-term PGM approaches could be perceived as extractive.

Secondly, building decision making capability.

The way in which PGM programmes have sought to build decision making capability and establish structures for decision making to happen vary in each instance. For any of the Lankelly Chase funded locations in the UK, the agenda was already pre-established that PGM (or DDM or PRA) was there to bring voice and involvement to those people who are marginalised in society and to challenge an unjust system. As such, every aspect of PGM including how and who it sought to involve was driven by that central purpose. So, we note that in both the York and Teams & Dunston programmes, a great emphasis was placed on reaching out to people with lived experience that might be regarded as marginalised, oppressed, vulnerable or facing difficult circumstances and adversity. Facilitators who were responsible for some of that engagement shared important insights:

'When I was doing my community engagement activity, I came across women who had been victims of domestic violence. Their decision making power had been taken away. They would be in a supermarket and couldn't remember what they liked to eat or drink or struggled with knowing what they were able to do on their own independently. So for these people, who we were trying to involve in the DDM approach, we had to go right the way back to decision making and ask 'who makes good decisions in your lives, who makes bad decisions in your lives, who is responsible for it? We put together a pack of stuff around their responses. Often, in fact 99% of the time people would say 'the Council' makes the decisions that affect their lives. Then they would say the Council isn't good at making good decisions. But when we asked 'what decisions would you like the Council to make better' the residents were not sure about that. There was a lot to unlearn and learn to equip people for decision making."

Lankelly Chase confirmed that each location they supported chose a different approach in 'how to decide how to decide' – from the learning they wished to do, to the type of PGM model they wished to establish. In York, the PWLE alongside the facilitator chose to do something called 'Deep Democracy' (formal learning) whereas in Teams and Dunston the work related more to helping PWLE be in a good personal headspace that would prepare them for being able to make decisions about things that would affect other people in their community e.g. by investing in Mental Health First Aid training, having social gatherings and eating together to create bonds and connections.

In a number of PGM examples, there were a high volume of applications for community grants that would have been too many for a single panel to review in a short time period. In these examples, the Foundation (either in role as originator or intermediary organisation distributing someone else's funding) took on additional roles of filtering out / screening applications or providing an external assessment process. Approaches are too divergent to comment on whether the time efficiency benefit created through these functions, actually have an unintended consequence of diminishing the power or potential of the decision making group.

Spotlight on the PGM Landscape Mapping Survey, February 2023

Survey question: What methods do you use to identify the community/ communities whose participation is essential to a PGM funding channel/programme?

Mixture of methods used by organisations. Most common are:

1. **Open calls** through different channels, including websites, newsletters and social media, with a focus on outreach to target communities.
2. **Ongoing community outreach** through being embedded in communities served, for instance through 'Community Committees' or specific 'Community Champions'.
3. **Staff teams with lived experience** of the issues the organisation focuses on, which helps with identification and engagement.
4. **Community consultations** done at specific moments to inform strategy development and funding priorities.
5. **Long-term partnerships** and engagement with local grassroots community organisations, or working with specialist referral partners for harder-to-reach communities.
6. **Nomination windows** for existing members to identify new members.
7. **Technical/research approaches** to identifying communities most affected, including using public datasets and indices that measure levels of inequality and marginalisation.

Other issues raised:

- **Intersection between funder priorities and target areas:** Generally, organisations noted that identification methods are determined by a combination of the boroughs they are based in, targeted geographies, specific issues or programme areas they have, and their specific funding priorities / streams.
- **Greater access to marginalised groups:** Some organisations are seeking ways to target groups that face multiple barriers to engagement more directly, for instance those that are digitally excluded.

"Participatory grantmaking isn't just about who decides how grants are spent, it's creating a different sort of city where everyone has some influence."

Thirdly, <u>how participatory is PGM</u>?

All respondents interviewed for the study said PGM was definitely more participatory than the other grantmaking approaches they invested in or had been involved in previously. Here's how:

- **Use of participatory models:** The use of the "8 breaths" model and inspiration from methodologies like "deep democracy" from South Africa indicate a commitment to participatory decision making by those involved.
- **External facilitators encouraging participation:** The involvement of external facilitators, such as "Art of Hosting," (in 'York Deciding Together') helped foster a highly participatory approach, and permission was granted to maintain openness.
- **Open vs. closed approach:** A deliberate choice to keep the process open despite pressure to make it more closed, demonstrating a commitment to inclusivity and community involvement.
- **Listening to lived experience:** Voices of people with lived experience were acknowledged and listened to, indicating an effort to incorporate diverse perspectives in decision making.
- **Challenging orthodoxy:** The PGM process challenged traditional grantmaking orthodoxies, encouraging more honest and generous conversations about grantmaking decisions.
- **Conflict resolution and deep democracy:** The use of conflict resolution techniques aimed at resolving disagreements and ensuring that minority voices are heard.
- **Empowering facilitators:** Strong facilitation skills were deemed essential for enabling voices to be heard and for decisions to be made in a fully participatory way.
- **No strings attached funding:** Emphasis on providing funding with no strings attached, focusing on the shared experience of participants rather than imposing rigid conditions encouraged participation.
- **Empowering communities:** The grantmaking process was seen as a means to empower individuals who had felt marginalised and passive in shaping their communities.
- **Resource assurance:** The assurance of financial resources prior to idea collection encouraged sustained community engagement and reduced fear of being let down.
- **Mental health initiatives as a result:** The PGM process led to the identification of important community needs, such as mental health support, and resulted in initiatives like Mental Health First Aid training (Teams & Dunston).
- **Youth-led decision making:** Young people were actively involved in decision making, taking over the process and applying their techniques and preferences learned prior to one PGM process (in Scarborough).
- **Desire for feedback and engagement:** Participants expressed a desire for two-way communication with grant applicants, feedback, and ongoing engagement to understand the impact of funded projects.
- **Importance of lived experience:** The sentiment that PGM should involve individuals with lived experience highlights the significance of first-hand knowledge in decision making.
- **Reflective approach:** There was acknowledgment of the need for reflection and improvements in the PGM process, indicating a commitment to continuous learning.
- **Payment for involvement:** Some PWLE were paid for their involvement e.g. £250 vouchers for YDT participants. Payment for involvement is an important and fair mechanism for encouraging high levels of participation by PWLE and whilst known to be a challenging field, new, clearer policies are expected to emerge in 2024.
- **Flexible application processes:** Some PGM approaches feel that traditional methods of seeking written applications from community groups or organisations can become a barrier in of itself and they have therefore offered opportunities for non-written applications e.g. a short film clip or a conversation or a presentation format as preferred.

Survey question: How do you gather feedback from these communities about whether the approaches have been genuinely participatory?

Wide range of **feedback mechanisms** are used:

1. **Direct verbal feedback** using a range of approaches, for instance paying panellists to carry out 'coffee and chat' participatory reporting with grantees they fund through their panel roles. Other examples given included participatory workshops, interviews, and testimonials gathered during meetings.
2. **Direct written feedback**, including through emails, feedback / impact surveys (sometimes anonymous), grantee reports, and general feedback forms.
3. **Community learning partners** linked to each grantee to gather and share learning, including through storytelling methodologies.
4. **External evaluations** conducted by universities or specialist evaluation organisations.

Several organisations highlighted the importance of combining **'formal'** and **'informal'** feedback mechanisms. Several others noted that their feedback processes are **co-designed** and sometimes **co-delivered** with communities served, and therefore would vary based on their ideas and preferences.

- **Timing of feedback gathering:** Most organisations noted that gathering feedback is both an ongoing process and one that is built into specific milestones, i.e. feedback sessions conducted after each funding round ends and/or during Annual General Meetings.
- **More systematic evaluation:** Organisations expressed an **overall aim** to embed evaluation and feedback within overall PGM processes, and are at different stages of how effectively this is done.

"Our approaches have evolved over the last 5 years and we're much more iterative – we are constantly asking for feedback from our community panellists and grantees, and making improvements to the process."

Summary: The grantmaking processes described by respondents to this study appear to suggest the approaches in their different contexts have been highly participatory, with an emphasis on inclusivity, empowerment, and the use of techniques to ensure diverse voices are heard in decision making. These insights reflect an intentionality to involving community members and fostering a sense of agency among participants.

At the PGM learning together workshop in December 2023 a host of practical questions and insights were shared about PGM processes, too long to include in this report. A range of companion presentation slide decks and 'Q&As' have been created instead and shared amongst workshop participants that point to a) curiosity about and b) experience of the following aspects of PGM governance, structure and processes that could best be shared in future through a community of practice approach – possibly a published interactive online guide too.

21 questions were shared between the group, who since the workshop, have started to share their thoughts on each one – the emergence of an organic community of practice that could through learning together improve what they already do or are planning for the future

Questions related to these key themes of process (and learning):

1. Engagement, inclusion, and involvement
2. Removing barriers, making things easy and fair
3. Funding processes and behaviours
4. Risk and failure
5. 'Change' and the difference that PGM could make
6. Inspiration for PGM practice
7. Future – 'PGM could be even better if…'

The same workshop generated **18 top tips** for PGM that are included later in this chapter as part of the learning lessons to come out of this study *(examples only below, full details are in the slides)*.

Engagement, inclusion and involvement

01 — What is the best way to reach the genuinely hard to reach – being genuinely inclusive?

02 — What do people feel is the best way of engaging people in the first instance in PGM?

03 — What is the best way to get more diverse range of people involved in PGM / panels? i.e. not the usual suspects, the loudest voices or those with the time to be involved

Questions and curiosity from the PGM learning together workshop

Top tips 11-15

11	Failure is an option!
12	Recipients of services provided / funded can advise on how good they are.
13	Give everyone the chance to be involved. Have an incentive!
14	Payment for involvement. It is a thank you for your participation and shared experience. Include payments for transport and more often than not refreshments.
15	Funders should be using PGM in at least some of their work; even if it's just a pilot!

The Q&As and top tips could arguably form the basis for a very practical **PGM checklist or guide** easily created as part of any support package for those in North Yorkshire practicing, or thinking of starting, a PGM approach as part of their community empowerment activity – whilst complementing the range of toolkits and resources already freely available from the internet.

9.5   What projects get supported?

It hasn't been the focus of this feasibility study to identify or assess the efficacy of the community projects that ultimately get awarded using the Participatory Grantmaking mechanism, though this might be an interesting research inquiry for the future. We have included some information about the projects awarded in the companion 'deep dive case studies' for York Deciding Together[57] and the Teams & Dunston PGM experiences. Please see those separate products for further insights.

As the desk research described though, published evaluations of PGM whilst rare already, are even scarcer when it comes to locating evaluations of the outcomes of the community projects awarded. The focus of the research literature – and indeed the topic of conversation that seemed more important to those taking part in the primary research for this study – was the process itself and how the process is an important, added value and distinct outcome in itself for participants (their agency, self-determined power, skills and confidence gains for example).

However, it is relatively straightforward to locate lists of projects that have been awarded for most of the PGM examples mentioned in this report, or by request to either a Foundation or Local Authority officer depending on which stakeholders are involved.

There is divergence of opinion in those who took part in the primary research though – some genuinely believing that the quality of decisions made by their resident-led community panellists are 'different and better'; balanced by funders who have experience of non-participatory grantmaking saying they were unconvinced yet through their pilots that decisions were 'different or better'. In fact, some argued that decision making by the differently composed panel simply replaced one set of biases (i.e. that a traditional local authority or Foundation professional staff team might unconsciously have) with another set of biases.

Interestingly, the Eastfield Cash for Causes community grants scheme will be commissioning an external evaluation of their scheme in 2024 with a view to understanding the benefits and outcomes from the £112,000+ of community projects awarded by their resident-weighted panel. The focus appears to be on establishing whether the projects have contributed to pre-defined quality of life indicators for the people of Eastfield and the key objectives of the Eastfield Regeneration Pact Partnership: people, place, employment, aspiration and community facilities.

9.6 What is the added value of PGM?

Organisations listed a wide range of risks from stopping PGM:

1. **Lessened authenticity and impact:** Virtually all organisations noted their funding would have reduced impact if it did not incorporate participatory approaches, and their programmes would lack the authenticity brought by the direct involvement of communities served. Programmes would no longer benefit from the expertise of people and groups with lived experience of the issues faced in funding.

2. **Lack of trust in grantmakers:** No longer conducting participatory grantmaking would damage relationships of trust that have taken a long time to build, and therefore the reputation of funders in communities.

3. **Less funding would go to underserved and marginalised communities:** Many grassroots organisations overlooked by 'traditional' funders would lose access to flexible and often unrestricted pots of funding.

- **Existential:** Several organisations noted that they only use PGM approaches, and therefore their work and funding would cease to exist if they could no longer do grantmaking in a participatory way.
- **Further research:** Others noted it would be useful to have more research directly comparing the impact of PGM approaches compared to other types of funding practices.

"We would become System to People which would completely diminish what we currently achieve through People to People."

Source: PGM UK Landscape Mapping Survey, February 2023

As the desk research highlighted, there are **no reliable assessments of PGM compared to non-participatory grantmaking**. The literature contains a mix of subjective views as to their relative value.

Similarly, for this study, we have sought to identify patterns of opinion by asking each interviewee whether they felt PGM added value compared to other available grantmaking approaches.

Viewed through the most positive lens here are ways in which PGM has – *or could* – add value in the views of respondents that contributed to this study. These insights should be viewed as non-generalisable results.

- **Community connection and strengthened networks:** PGM has contributed to building stronger connections between grantees. Grantees are not just recipients of funds but are part of a network where they can collaborate and learn from each other.

- **Enhanced city-wide collaboration:** PGM – and associated work of the York MCN - has strengthened the connection and collaboration across the entire city. This increased collaboration enables organisations to work together more effectively, creating a more unified approach to community improvement.

- **Collective knowledge enhancement:** PGM has contributed to the enrichment of collective knowledge. It has allowed organisations like Two Ridings Foundation to interact with a broader and more diverse range of people, which can lead to a deeper understanding of community needs.

- **Increased flexibility and openness:** PGM has demonstrated a high degree of flexibility, openness, and responsiveness to local dynamics. It adapts to the specific needs and voices of the community, allowing for a broader range of participants.

- **Challenges power dynamics:** PGM challenges traditional power dynamics by shifting decision making authority from traditional grantmakers to the community itself (typically in the form of community panellists). This shift empowers individuals who have felt marginalised and passive in shaping their communities (subject to the profile of those people that choose to get involved in PGM and the decision making aspect).

- **Surprising and innovative results:** PGM is seen as a way to achieve surprising and innovative results that may not have been possible with more traditional grantmaking approaches. It encourages experimentation and allows for unexpected outcomes suggest some of the respondents, generating hyperlocal ideas for social good that might not be reached through e.g. local or health authority led specifications / grants. For example, the Pay it Forward neighbour scheme (in Oxford) addressed a very specific and localised need that might have been overlooked by more centralised grantmaking approaches.

- **Philosophical and conceptual approach:** PGM goes beyond simply distributing funds; it has a deeply philosophical and conceptual approach aimed at rewriting the way money flows, who decides it, and changing the exercise of power.

- **Inclusive recruitment process:** PGM has an inclusive recruitment process that intentionally reaches out to marginalised communities and reduces exclusion barriers. It aims to involve a broader range of people in decision making.

- **Bridge Builders for capacity building:** The creation of paid positions for 'Bridge Builders' (community developers) has been instrumental in building the capacity of individuals to participate in the decision making process effectively and to help create a legacy from PGM (in Gateshead).

- **Evolution and Growth:** PGM has the potential for growth and evolution beyond static panels. The concept of developing satellite groups with devolved budgets could lead to the expansion of participatory processes more generally across a greater number of place-based / affinity-based communities (but this needs investment and a long-term mind-set commitment beyond a community pot of money to distribute).
- **Focus on depth of learning and 'cohort' support:** PGM emphasises a deep learning experience for participants and peer-based cohort support. This depth of learning and journey as a cohort is considered a significant value addition because of the agency and empowerment outcomes that wouldn't be derived in alternative grantmaking methods.

Experience of a young person involved in a national decision making panel to distribute mental health funding

"My experience was one of a small group of young people aged 18-24 recruited to be on a national panel for a mental health human rights charity with a focus on trying to make sure young people knew their rights. The process was involved. We met in London, had regular meetings and were encouraged to make decisions on 'everything' – priorities, what do we need, want, what have we heard from other young people. There was money involved and we were asked to decide what percentage of available funding went into different areas.

We decided to create a whole platform to educate young people; we recruited a load of other young people and trained them up as rights advocates. We went into other contexts, did a manifesto. Adults from the charity were there but their role was only to hire the venue not influence our thinking. They gave us the sticky notes and pens and just enabled us to come together and do the thinking. It's different to other experiences I have seen in my professional work at a Council where you might have some people with lived experience on a decision-making panel. The difference is that you make friendships through the much more involved process that was entailed."

- **The ideal of reaching 'new' organisations:** PGM aims to reach *grass-roots* organisations or groups and provide funding that might not have happened through traditional grantmaking approaches. It strives to support organisations beyond the third sector or volunteers, focusing on those directly impacted by community issues.

Summary

PGM offers several advantages over traditional grantmaking approaches, including enhanced community connections, a shift in decision making to challenge traditional power dynamics, flexibility, and the potential for surprising and innovative results. It promotes inclusivity, learning, and a deeper understanding of community needs, making it a valuable addition to, rather than displacement of, grantmaking strategies.

For balance, however, it should be noted that some funders did not think PGM provided a means necessarily for a better quality of decision to be made, nor did they find it an expedient mechanism for getting their money into communities – in fact it was much slower and more expensive in their view. This highlights the fact that different stakeholders will ascribe different metrics of success in their mind to PGM and how they will seek to compare it with their existing grantmaking approaches.

One respondent (anonymised for reasons of confidentiality but for whose analysis below we are grateful) provided a thematic assessment of the differences between DDM / PGM and traditional non-participatory approaches based on their place based PGM experiences.

Characteristic	Big Local / traditional approaches	DDM / PGM approaches
1: Aspiration	For PGM experiments seen elsewhere he's it's not clear what the goal is. "It can feel a bit like it's a 'see what happens or nice thing to do.'"	There is more intentionality involved with PGM. 'We're trying to rewrite the way money flows and who decides it, getting closer to local democracy movements. We're trying to change the way power is exercised.'
2: Participation scope	There is less intention it can seem to reach the seldom heard or the marginalised in community and bring them into the decision making process	'We have deliberately built from the margins NOT gone out and said, 'who wants to be involved'. We're really proud of our recruitment process and have overcome exclusion barriers. We've increased the range of people who have got involved in decision making. Our approach has been deeply philosophical and conceptual.'
3: Capacity	Most models focus on forming a panel, bringing in people for training and some paying for people's time.	'We purposely created paid positions for posts akin to community development workers creating time for people to come into systems change and all the learning. In our first iteration we had Council Directors, VCSE representatives etc but they didn't commit over time – they were too busy and don't have the time to give to it beyond the start. Our CDWs are essential.'
4: Growth / evolution	Typically a panel – sometimes it iterates but not always clear how it evolves over time or grows to increase the shifting of power.	'We have 13 people on our panel though it doesn't feel like a traditional panel. They comprise our 7 CDWs and a few other residents. They are drawn 'from the margins', they are known by, trusted by and are active in their local communities; they are renowned for community relationships not professional endorsement. We know 13 isn't enough – 'a small static panel' - so we've come up with the idea of evolving into satellite groups where each CDW develops their own satellite group with their own devolved budget.'
5: 'The way we've built it.'	Some models get to a tipping point where people with lived experience form a company or entity / projects or organisations after initial experiences together	'Different options were considered. We were being pushed to create an entity – a company / CIC or such like but we didn't feel this would shift power. Option 2 was encouraging our CDWs to be self-employed but that would mean too much risk for them, so we've gone for a 3rd option whereby local VCSEs / charities were asked to be host employers – and they all said yes. This surprised us but we found that they did believe community should have more power, though one CEO of a mature charity in the area has protested that the investment being made in the model is a waste.' (compared to the alternative presumably of investing in them as a charity directly).

9.7 Learning lessons

Learning lessons from the depth interviews completed during this feasibility study include:

1. Time and trust building: One of the key lessons is that PGM requires time to build trust, both among participants and between the funder and the community. Trust is essential for effective participatory decision making.

2. Power Transition: Funders must be willing to hand over power to the participants, recognising that PGM shifts decision making authority from traditional grant makers to the community.

3. Building relationships: Building relationships with the community through intentional engagement and one-on-one conversations is critical. This engagement phase should be approached with care and dedication.

4. Capacity building: Capacity building is essential in PGM, especially for community members participating in the decision making process. This support helps them feel more comfortable with financial accountability and grant scrutiny.

5. Transparency and clarity: Funders must be transparent and clear about their intentions and the amount of money available. Clarity is crucial for both funders and participants.

6. Inclusivity: Efforts should be made to ensure that PGM panels or collectives are inclusive of lived experiences and diverse backgrounds, reducing the risk of elitism or exclusion.

7. Flexibility and innovation: PGM can encourage innovative ways of applying for grants, such as using videos or online formats instead of traditional written applications. This flexibility has the potential of making the process more accessible.

8. Volume of applications: Dealing with a high volume of grant applications can be challenging. The process of filtering and preparing applications for review by the collective takes time and resources, and the volume of applications can highlight the scarcity of funding.

9. Consensus building: Achieving consensus in PGM can be difficult and time-consuming. Decision making discussions may take longer, but this collaborative process aims to ensure that decisions reflect the community's collective values and priorities.

10. Support for Young People: Providing technical expertise around due diligence and ensuring their roles are meaningful beyond funding decisions is crucial.

11. Defined timelines: While some advocate for a timeline-free approach, having a clear timeline can help prevent spending excessive time in the "groan zone" (of the 8 breaths model where used) and keep the process moving forward.

12. Bridging strategy and application: Bridging the gap between strategy and practical application is essential. Learning from pilot approaches can help refine the role of participants and align it with the shared goals of all involved.

13. Sustainability and ongoing support: PGM models have the potential to deliver more sustainable outcomes by building networks and providing ongoing support to grantees. It goes beyond a one-time grant and focuses on long-term community impact.

Summary: The learning lessons emphasise the importance of trust-building, flexibility, consensus-building, transparency, and capacity-building in PGM. It also highlights the need for inclusivity, and meaningful roles for participants. Divergent views exist about the need for a pre-defined timeline or not depending on the 'purism' of approach involved.

Learning lessons from the desk research complements those described from this study.

Momentarily jumping back to the desk research, it is worth highlighting the learning lesson themes that emerged from Hannah Peterson's published work about PGM. She said her Fellowship experience around the world had made her think more about:

- The **drivers** for PGM and the importance of being clear what they are
- The opportunity for PGM to contribute to **systemic change** reflecting that:
  - *It's more than rocking up and making a call whether or not to fund…What's the wrap around support and training? What are the priorities and strategies? Who sets these?*
  - *What data and intelligence can be used to support this? How can approaches such as kopano[58] be used to frame funding discussions?*
- **Redistributing power** and how PGM is just a tool that provides us with approaches that can help us to start to re-address imbalances
- **The blockers to PGM and getting Boards on board:**
  - *PGM takes much longer and is much more expensive to deliver than traditional grantmaking (The Camden Giving toolkit says 'as a rough guide in 2023 it cost around £17,500 to run one round of PGM, including grant administration, working on the basis we will distribute £100,000 – see appendix for more details about this)*
  - *The concern that those without lived experience of an issue will no longer be needed within Foundations and that first-hand experience would be valued above and beyond both academic and work experience*
  - *Staff do not have the skill sets to deliver participatory approaches*
  - *There is a much greater risk with participatory grantmaking and that those making decisions might make the 'wrong' decisions*
- **Evaluation** – why are you evaluating and what part of the process do you want to evaluate?

'It's also important to explore and understand the power dynamics that occur through evaluation about whose needs you are serving. Stop coming at it from the funder's point of view. Thinking more creatively about learning and how we do and share makes conversations in this space more exciting and less onerous.'

In the PGM Landscape Mapping Survey research (2023) many learning lessons were shared:-

Top three lessons shared by organisations with experience of PGM

1
Decisions made by people closest to the issue result in better funding

As noted by one organisation, "To do PGM well beneficiaries must be at the heart of every decision and power dynamics must be a constant conversation to ensure that as the model evolves, it is led by the needs of the beneficiaries."

It is important to make explicit from the outset what lies with and outside the scope of participatory decisions,, to set appropriate and clear expectations.

2
PGM requires both a philosophical and an operational shift towards greater equity

Committing to the PGM approach has the potential to be transformational for funders, individuals and the wider community.

But it is critical to have real understanding of lived experience. The people who join panels cannot and do not represent everyone else in that group - otherwise, panellists can feel immense pressure to be "the voice" of their respective groups.

3
It takes time and resource to get it right, but it is worth the effort

The relationships and trust built throughout the PGM process, and the impact that becomes possible, makes all of the effort worth it.

As noted by an organisation, It is "not easy or a quick fix," but "it is not that difficult to start doing [PGM] if the willpower is there."

Patience is key to gaining buy-in and backing from a wide range of local stakeholders, and to enable transformative impact.

Survey question: What challenges regarding PGM have you faced as an organisation?

Organisations mentioned several key challenges:

1. **Lack of understanding, leading to resistance:** Lack of understanding of what PGM entails often leads to resistance, particularly at Board level, where trustees have limited experience. The act of ceding power creates nervousness about potential reputational, fiduciary and financial risks.

2. **Requires deep commitment and resourcing:** PGM requires investment across a range of areas. This includes financial (paying people for their involvement and needing a simple mechanism for doing so), staff skills and capacity (ensuring team members are trained in participatory approaches and have sufficient time to do their work), and oftentimes extended timelines (funding processes can be longer if a wider range of voices are to be incorporated). Accountability frameworks must also change, to ensure space is created for genuine participation.

3. **Potential burden on community members:** Ceding power to people who are themselves part of communities served can create personal challenges for them - this work can be exhausting, and the cost of living crisis has also amplified the challenges for community members to participate fully and meaningfully.

- Organisations for whom PGM represents only part of their funding were particularly concerned about their **potential lack of skills** in or understanding of participatory grantmaking approaches. Organisations fear a lack of knowledge may lead them to approach participation in a surface-level way, setting up expectations that are then unfulfilled, leading to unintended consequences.

"Building skills, and relationships based on mutual trust and understanding takes time versus efficiency in processes during a grant round to disseminate your pot of money."

Practical challenge raised: *How to pay people for their time without affecting their tax bracket or universal credit - lack of guidance from the Department of Work and Pensions.*

Survey question: What are/will be the main barriers to further embedding PGM approaches across the UK funding sector?

Organisations articulated several barriers:

1. **Inequity, racism and lack of respect for communities:** As noted earlier, how funders assess risk in PGM is most often skewed against people from Black and other racially minoritised or underrepresented communities, therefore ongoing issues stemming from racism and prejudice continue to be a barrier. Linked to this, organisations in the UK funding sector fear community funding decisions would be different from trustee decisions, and are concerned about what this means for their own status.

2. **Gatekeeping and unwillingness to relinquish power:** Organisations articulated a general fear of challenging the status quo in the funding sector (mainly trustees or senior staff making decisions), which is dominated by traditional perspectives on philanthropy. Some rules and regulations, for instance from the Charity Commission, entrench this view.

3. **The potential requirement for additional resourcing and expertise:** In cases where adopting PGM approaches requires committing additional financial resources, organisations feel this could be a significant barrier to progress.

- Organisations also identified a general perception that PGM is well suited for **small amounts of funding**/small grants, but is still considered too risky for large grants.
- In some contexts, PGM "is still considered **too radical** a change within the current funding landscape."

"Influencing donors to give larger, unrestricted core funding and onward grant-funding has been a challenge because it means they are completely putting the trust in us and our communities to do what is best, without knowing exactly where their money will be going to."

This same survey also asked funding organisations practising PGM how they incorporate PGM and participation more generally in their **governance** practices e.g. through their Board or advisory groups; **strategy development** processes at an organisational level; **grantmaking processes**; and **diversity, equality and inclusion** approaches.

For organisations seeking to build more participation into their existing approaches these learning lessons will be especially useful and are worth reading in more detail[59].

Learning lessons shared by 'A Better Way' Network about PGM were:

- Participatory grantmaking is not just about bringing communities into decision making about who receives resources but is also about allowing them to shape the agenda and the priorities for new funds.

- As well as improving decision making, it brings other benefits, helping to empower and grow community and creating new collaborations. It can be life-changing for those involved and build capacity and confidence in the community.

- The process itself is important, including training and payment for volunteers. Local authorities can sometimes help by recruiting stakeholders from the community. One approach that's worked is to bring in previous recipients of grants into the decision making process. It is not enough just to bring people into the room - true collaboration with the community is required.

- There's a lot of potential but current practice tends to be focused on relatively small budgets, so there is a need to grow confidence in the approach.

- Barriers to getting this right include culture, risk aversion and 'white saviourism' and that is why there is a need to build capacity across all of those involved, including funders who are not always comfortable with sharing power in this way.

- There's a lot to learn from others, rather than just reinventing wheels, including from Scotland, where 1% of local authority budgets have been earmarked for this approach, and internationally, for example in Brazil. It's important that practice is shared.

Learning lessons from the PGM learning together workshop (12th December 2023, Scarborough) for this study added context to the themes of **voice, decision making, accountability, capacity building, power and learning**. Extracts are reproduced next.

Voice

Foundation perspectives	PGM facilitator and citizen perspectives
"We're trying to work out the best way to hear voices and get people involved" "For over 100 years the same people get levelled up in society. You often end up with the loudest voices and that doesn't get you closer to issues such as what is being done on anti-racism or mental health."	"PGM can help reach the seldom heard hard to reach voices."
"Invariably I see the same faces in the same room time and again so how do you get out to other voices and make it a participatory experience?"	"There's a sort of assumption that their voice – those isn't heard if they don't turn up, but it's not always the case. I have people say to me I've got a strong point, but I can't speak because of anxiety or depression, but will you speak for me? We can act as intermediaries."
"How do we get to those next level of people who don't necessarily come banging on the doors?"	"I'm here and talk for people I feel don't have a voice."
	"Kids vaping in Barrowcliff are never going to get to the table so other adults try to represent them."
	"And we talk about the unheard minority, but you've got enough problems with those who do come forward!" (Transforming Community Mental Health decision making participant)
	"The greater the diversity of platforms for communication in this process the better if you're hoping to engage with and build trust with stigmatised, marginalised communities."

Decision making

Foundation and local authority perspectives

"You're trying to encourage ways in which a community is represented and making their grants for you as a funder."

"We went for a cross-sector panel including people with lived experience on the panel."

"Big Local Barrowcliff is a partnership with up to 15 residents."

"We've tried in the past using participatory budgeting to move decision making power from Councillors over to local people through an event where voting takes place."

"For our participatory cost of living approach we use the language 'how we come together'"

"You want different people involved in decision making, but tend to find the same people, hear the same voices, in the same room. Where do we put the adverts? How do we get the facilitation of PGM right?"

"The alternative to PGM, is a group of trustees / executives from a foundation who make all the decisions about how money is spent and the same people 'level up' in society."

PGM facilitator and citizen perspectives

"In the area of mental health, and my own experience in a charity [ex Chair] our Trustees were from the membership which were mostly mental health service users, including patients and carers and min 51% of Trustees have got lived experience – voted for by the membership.

Ultimately, decisions were being taken by the end users. So, in mental health some people have to receive services by the appropriate Section they committed to (so in these cases things are done to and for users), but voluntary patients can choose what they do – which means there's the dynamic of 'with', and 'by' patients. We've tried to use this in our Mental Health Transformation activity."

Decision making
PGM facilitator and citizen perspectives

"When I was doing my community engagement activity, I came across women who had been victims of domestic violence. Their decision-making power had been taken away. They would be in a supermarket and couldn't remember what they liked to eat or drink or struggled with knowing what they were able to do on their own independently. So for these people, who we were trying to involve in the DDM approach, we had to go right the way back to decision making and ask 'who makes good decisions in your lives, who makes bad decisions in your lives, who is responsible for it?

We put together a pack of stuff around their responses. Often, in fact 99% of the time people would say 'the Council' makes the decisions that affect their lives. Then they would say the Council isn't good at making good decisions. But when we asked 'what decisions would you like the Council to make better' the residents were not sure about that. **There was a lot to unlearn and learn to equip people for decision making**."

"I prefer the language 'decision making space' to panel as the word 'panel' boxes you in. It's more about 'how we show up to the space' from our experience in York Deciding Together. The process for YDT was very slow. That formation piece. The facilitation held the space well. By the time the people were making decisions together they had gone through time to get to know each other. A lot of time and effort."

(NB the word panel was used in the promotional collateral for YDT and almost every other example given at the learning workshop. The above comment is a reflection over time about the limitation of this descriptive word)

Accountability

Foundation and local authority perspectives

"Lankelly Chase were in fact super risk averse with the money. Our Foundation's Grants Team were brought in to deal with the adminny side for our accountability to the Charity Commission. There needs to be that documentation."(referring to the York Deciding Together experience)

"Whilst it's great to be open and inclusive there has to be a critique of what we need and what we don't need. The Foundation needs to know we're following grant making policy and due diligence."

"Yeah, I've got a policy here, but we also need to be asking 'how can I work within it, change the flow so we're not creating barriers for people to get involved."

PGM facilitator and citizen perspectives

"There is a level of accountability if handing out money. Especially if it's public money you're dealing with you need some sort of trail. Great if Lankelly Chase comes along with £1 million and says 'spend how you want', brilliant!"

"There is accountability in PGM – the auditing we did as part of York Deciding Together and to the funders."

"You can seek to stretch the boundaries though with something like PGM."

Capacity building

Foundation and local authority perspectives

Appeared to align around the ideal that PGM could support their ambitions for building community capacity and creating community leadership. Their intentions are positive and enabling.

"The loudest voices might still be the ones making representations as a funder we want to reach into communities and utilise leaders to find other leaders."

"Even with PGM you naturally get people coming forward who are leaders."

PGM facilitator and citizen perspectives

These people would not necessarily focus on the ambitions of capacity building and community leadership as they are taking part in PGM or DDM for their own reasons.

The reasons are more likely due to feeling there is an opportunity for personal growth, curiosity (something to see / try / find out more about), and / or out of a sense of local / social injustice and desire to create change around something they care about or experience/d in their life.

Power
Foundation and local authority perspectives

"How do we get the power to people, to build people up to make grants, to represent their communities with confidence?"

"SeeCHANGE's leadership team is trying to cede power to the community it serves. Bex will just go and sit in the coffee shop and talk with people. We had our panel and it was a good process sat beside each of the people coming forward with their ideas. Then we've got an event for people who got the money, coffee and cake, and we'll be asking how they felt honestly about the process and what they would like to do differently."

"How can we build on the models? PGM is the starting point."

"One of the pitfalls of PGM is that you are presented with a load of models, and they all lead inevitably to a panel of some sort. All you're really doing is replicating your funding methodology to get other people to do it. Yes it's 'P' (participatory) and yes it's 'GM' (Grantmaking), but it's not PGM! The idea of pulling a panel together is perhaps then the wrong mentality?"

"For our BAME community PGM in Tyne and Wear and Northumberland we used Phoenix Way as they are going to know much more about their communities than we do. They took the approach of having a panel, a decision making group. In the last conversation someone said to me that 'we've just realised we're just creating the same power process that we're trying to get away from. It's been incredibly important for them to arrive at this point of realising they are replicating the power system."

Power
Foundation and local authority perspectives

"Is PGM building the same broken system with a different group of people? **You cannot dismantle the master's house with the master's tools**. If you use the same tools from the same institutions that have oppressed us what changes? We need to start building a new system. PGM is the best thing we can do but I don't think PGM is the starting point. We want to ditch the master's tools and those experiencing structural anti racism (for example) need to whittle their own.

We're hosting an event at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in York as I think we need to bring people together with lived experience but NOT throw them into the work of the project; instead, heal them. We use **creative practice** as a tool for healing and storytelling.

And if we were doing Devolved Decision Making we would do an open application process, not call it a panel. Rather, go into shops, salons, cafes and think 'what are the conditions that might be needed before they could bring their voice in the room?'

Start with bringing people together for meals, do some creative workshops. Then talk about values and governance and when the healing has happened, only then, start to make decisions about things such as money for projects. The success of PGM is relationships and journeys not just the money moved. PGM of the future is less about how much money moved in x amount of time – we need a decolonised approach."

Power
PGM facilitator and citizen perspectives

One issue raised was lack of payment for involvement. Those with lived experience often volunteer their time and are not being paid to be involved in decision making activities unlike officers or council workers for example, foundations, whose job it is to be there. It means that poorer people cannot be involved in an equitable way.

"We need to get to a lower position though with the grants. £2,000 seem so much accountability, what if it all goes wrong and it takes the magic out of it [PGM]). We need to get lower than £500 without the need for feedback. We can't seem to get to that tiny amount because of the mechanisms – need to smash that apart."

"What's needed is a bit of trust, in fact radical trust for PGM to work."

"A panel feels very us and them, whereas it needs to be 'we'. The process of the formation (example CMHT work) was slow but you go through the process of getting together and knowing each other. Which was a really important process to go on."

"Public money needs funding. If you're going to do PGM, you need to lose control a little bit."

"I think we need to make it much easier for individuals to get involved. Some people want to get together but there are so many formalities."

Examples of solutions

'Adventure Cards' were mentioned where £500 are preloaded to a card for a participant. "Great idea, but there are too many!"

£250 of vouchers per person were used as a means of remuneration for participants in the York Deciding Together approach.

Social Change Nest has been mentioned throughout the feasibility study.

The Social Change Nest – The Social Change Agency

- Through our fiscal hosting we offer secure and transparent money and grant management for foundations, groups, movements and networks in the UK and abroad.

- For funders and philanthropists, we provide a grant distribution service, making it easier to support small groups by acting as a link between the two, and taking on the financial admin.

- To help new movements hit the ground running, we provide start-up support, and work with early-stage organisations to strengthen their governance and infrastructure. We have a hub of resources for anyone trying to create change.

- Because we specialise in working with unincorporated groups, we have a thorough approach to risk, due diligence and compliance. So, you couldn't be in better hands.

Payment for Involvement Policy (Brand New)

7th February 2024 (2-4pm). York MCN will be sharing and finalising all the work they have been doing in 2023 on their Payment for Involvement policy.

Learning
Learn, fail, iterate, keep changing and remove barriers

"Failure is a real option – we shouldn't always look to succeed."

"Making mistakes is great."

"Took 3 attempts to get the Big Local Barrowcliff partnership right."

"PGM…the 1st time is going to be rubbish, 2nd time also rubbish but you're learning and building capacity, changing the design, being iterative."

"Most grant making uses an application form which is a barrier for people. We've got to get away from that as the main mechanism, however, people only ever use the application form even if you offer other options! It's important not to create systemic barriers."

"Application processes are a barrier in themselves. Got to get away from this being the only or default way of getting involved."

"The whole process was so inclusive (YDT)"

"The group….came from a social prescriber trying to get a community to come together."

"The YDT process was very slow, that formation and facilitation that held the space well. By the time the people were making decisions together they had gone through time to get to know each other – time and effort."

"I've got to justify to my (Foundation's) Board why PGM takes so long, to give enough time to run with it."

"There is a real importance in going back to the funders and saying 'just give it time'. We are changing seeds of cress to trees through PGM."

Learning
Question whether the process is just replicating current power systems, use creativity and measure the relationships and journeys not just the money moved

"For our PGM programme we tried to use a facilitator to bring out other local leaders but ended up with a panel of louder people and they weren't suggesting other people. We learned first that the professional facilitator role isn't always necessary [if you've got the skills within the Foundation] in fact they can bring their own bias too.

Second, the people on the panel, whilst it wasn't brilliant, they do have lived experience and are working for organisations and they can reach into other organisations themselves for the future e.g. into the youth community. Perhaps that's how the approach will evolve."

"PGM smashed my prejudices wide open. I've been on benefits for 20 years, suffered discrimination, poverty and trauma. People assume I don't know how to function."

"Alcoholics and addicts have the answers. Without patronising them, that's the bit PGM does."

"We have funded some fantastic projects."

"I'm a poet and I had an artist friend. We wanted something nice and special for local people to call their own so we created cards with a poem – they were distributed to cheer somebody's day up."

"It has taken a long time, so much so that I have had to justify to the board often as to why this is the case."

"The success of PGM is relationships and journeys not just the money moved."

"It's not easy to tap into people's voice who have felt a deficit, and yes we have to audit things, but can we make metrics more appropriate / suitable. We are creating a space with the best of intentions."

"Take it slow, let it grow."
PGM takes longer than traditional, alternative community grant making approaches. It is likely more expensive too and requires different skillsets amongst all participants.

9.8   Measures of PGM success and legacy

Please refer to the desk research chapter 3 (section 6.0) for insights about the challenge with measuring PGM efficacy and how traditional causal theory of change and subsequent methods for evaluating success are problematic in this field.

Contributors to the primary research for this feasibility study were asked, from their perspective, what successful PGM looked like – or what results they were seeking when first deciding either to invest in or participate in the activity.

'Success is the learning – that's the main outcome. Learning how to shift power, reach into communities, recruit lived experience, to see what is funded and to see how easy it was to get money out there into communities. We want communities to have decision making power. You learn about barriers to participation and find out ways to get more money into cold spots to help achieve more equitable funding distribution, in turn contributing to our operational strategy.'
(Foundation / funder perspective)

'I think the York Deciding Together process was brilliant and created a lot of good outcomes, I learned a lot as did most people involved. One of the main things is that the relationships between us have continued and strengthened.' (PWLE perspective)

'As a Foundation, following the PGM work in York, we now have greater reach and can have drop ins with people from diverse backgrounds whereas previously that might always have had to go out to tender as we were organisationally lacking some of that relational capital required.' (Foundation / intermediary perspective)

'The PGM – or DDM- activity in Gateshead produced the results we expected as a Board. We wanted the community to decide how to spend the money available to them and they have started to do that. We wanted to see people come forward with ideas and projects to be funded and there were lots of different ones – first aid training was the one example. But I don't think you get a better grant decision, so our expectations are more about the legacy of relationships that the PGM process encourages once the money has gone.' (Charitable trust / funder perspective)

'It's always been successful and enjoyable. There were some challenging questions though like: How are you going to prevent this becoming competitive – for the money – in the neighbourhoods? If people are allowed to put forward ideas as well as be on a decision panel won't they just fund themselves?' (Place-based funder perspective)

'The money did reach the right projects. They involved innovation, reached newer groups not just those with the best looking bids. There was space created to let people in that were excluded before.' (Foundation / intermediary perspective)

'It (the PGM activity) didn't reach all marginalised groups and in our blueprint recommendations we have said it's important to address diversity aspects earlier on; and continue communication with groups that don't necessarily bid or apply for funding first time round. The core outcomes for PGM are personal development for participants + muscle memory and changes to the power dynamics.' (PGM expert facilitating organisation perspective brought in by the intermediary organisation to activate PGM locally)

'Our Board are happy that power is being devolved and the first £1.5m has been agreed and is being distributed to organisations decided by young people.' (Foundation / funder perspective)

'How do you know PGM is working? When public sector organisations use it to spend their own money." (Foundation perspective)

As can be seen from the contributions, interviewees were more likely to stress the **outcome of learning** from the participatory process than seeing success being the **outcomes from the community projects** awarded. This same sentiment continued at the PGM learning together workshop in December 2023 (extracts below)

The main area of consensus amongst participants was that to measure PGM success requires a mind-set to acknowledge the following distinct aspect that is promoted by the participatory aspects of the PGM approach summed up neatly by one of the contributors: **'The success of PGM is measured in relationships built and personal journeys not just the impact of the grants and money moved' (Foundation perspective)**

The **legacy** hoped for from PGM – compared to alternative non-participatory grantmaking approaches is that the relationships and connections made by the participants through PGM endure beyond the time when any money runs out.

The longer-term legacy hoped for by advocates of PGM relate to the shifting of power in meaningful ways in more communities, and particularly amongst those who are marginalised or even oppressed by the existing systems in society. PGM is seen as a process that goes beyond traditional grantmaking aiming for long-term impact and community empowerment. Along that journey to enduring impact are a range of other likely outcomes though too including but not limited to:

- Recognising the **power of deep knowledge** of people with lived experience of issues that funding is seeking to address or communities that the funding seeks to serve. These people have current information and a deeper understanding of intersection of inequality than traditional grantmaking decision making models, so embedding lived experience into decision making across more communities should reap benefits of this nature that might not otherwise happen.

- **Community capacity** could grow and manifest in different ways as individuals involved in PGM grow themselves in confidence and agency. In Camden, one of the outcomes noticed after community panellists took part in PGM was that their overall levels of civic engagement also increased.

- **Community action may become more diverse** as different types of projects and grassroots organisations are funded through PGM decision making, increasing the breadth of opportunities for anyone in a community to play a role in making something fairer – whether a place, or a circumstance or a system.

- **Equality, inclusion and diversity** values may become more naturally embedded in place-based culture and behaviours as a consequence of PGM and the kind of decision making that could emerge.

9.9   The case for PGM

In seeking to arrive at a balanced case for the recommendations found in the next chapter of this report, the consultant has considered the secondary and primary research reviewed as part of this study. The desk research concludes that there is no reliable assessment of PGM efficacy as the evidence base is neither organised to address this approach to measurement or comparison with non-participatory grantmaking alternatives; nor is it strong enough to generalise. As such, any decision to establish new PGM activity in North Yorkshire or amplify what is already happening will be informed to a greater extent by the way in which those who have experienced or tried it talk about its merits and drawbacks. The Camden Giving PGM toolkit is a useful starting point, extracts reproduced here.
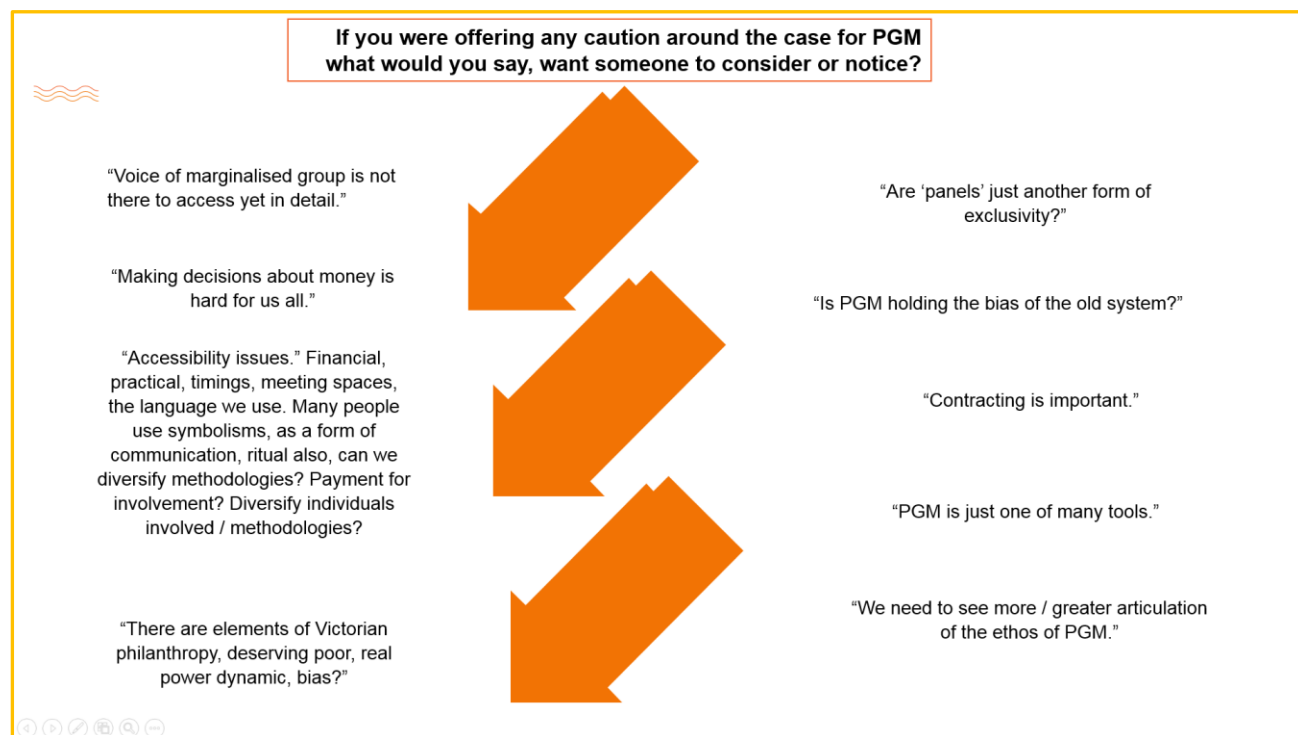
PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING

ADVANTAGES

- Including people from more diverse backgrounds can help make the award process more informed and legitimate, broaden sources of knowledge and expertise, and build relationships with the people and organisations they fund.
- Community panels do not have to shoulder the burden of responsibility if there is criticism about decisions – the grantmaking organisation supports with this.
- It can provide meaningful feedback for grant-seekers, to help them understand directly from the community they aim to benefit what is good and bad about their proposals.
- The transparency can help build external confidence in the grantmaking body and alleviate concerns about perceived corruption, prejudice, or bias.
- Community panels often see past 'poorly written' grant applications and can recognise the value in an organisation, community leader or project worthy of funding beyond the bid-writing abilities.
- It can often lead to communities moving from micro-grants to applying for larger grants by allowing them to demonstrate they can manage a grant and to build their confidence.
- It can also be help more people access funding as it offers funders the opportunity to start developing relationships and advertising other funding opportunities they might have.
- Communicating the outcomes of grant decisions and paying grantees can be carried out quicker. We and they can move quickly to respond to needs of our communities.

DISADVANTAGES

- If suggestions, ideas and recommendations are not taken seriously and integrated (in some part or whole) into the resulting strategy, guidelines or decision-making criteria, people may become disillusioned and unwilling to participate in future participatory activities the grant maker pursues.
- It can be difficult to discern how to balance experts with people affected by decisions. Completely removing 'experts' could lead to an absence of broader perspectives, which may constrain information gathering needed for decisions.
- Institutional constraints and internal policies may not allow sufficient flexibility for community panels to shape the criteria and parameters of the grant programmes.
- Existing grantmaking staff may feel community panels are making their roles obsolete, including those who have been hired specifically for their expertise in a particular area, issue or priority. This may mean there is push back from staff and boards who are unwilling to engage in this kind of process.
- Participation may skew toward "mob rule" if there are no filters or gatekeepers.
- Grantmaking organisations may be reluctant to "let go" of power and hand decisions to "non-professionals".

If local insight and experience is thought to be more useful than the experiences of Camden Giving in London, then these insights from the participants (from York, North Yorkshire and the North East) of the PGM learning together workshop in December 2023 may be of additional value.

If you were making a positive case for PGM, what would you say or want someone else to consider or notice?

"PGM can provide financial, economic mobilisation of previously marginalised individuals."

"Equity – meet people as individuals – empowerment of voice – let's not create another mechanism to make people feel less, because they do not want to participate in spaces that create hierarchy."

"Giving people a chance to do it, can create positive change."

"PGM is the start of democracy."

"PGM is not the end!"

"Keep the process simple and accessible to all."

"PGM can feel 'life changing' to individuals with lived experience being involved in decision making processes."

"Through PGM everyone has a chance to be included."

"With desire to devolve power, better things will happen."

"PGM promotes a change of power balance."

"The success of PGM is in relationships and connections."

"There is a link between inequalities and PGM being able to include more voices seldom heard."

"Space – practical and intellectual. What spaces are we using? Voice? Spoken? Does everyone want to speak – build confidence on if that is the expected trajectory!"

If you were offering any caution around the case for PGM what would you say, want someone to consider or notice?

"Voice of marginalised group is not there to access yet in detail."

"Making decisions about money is hard for us all."

"Accessibility issues." Financial, practical, timings, meeting spaces, the language we use. Many people use symbolisms, as a form of communication, ritual also, can we diversify methodologies? Payment for involvement? Diversify individuals involved / methodologies?

"There are elements of Victorian philanthropy, deserving poor, real power dynamic, bias?"

"Are 'panels' just another form of exclusivity?"

"Is PGM holding the bias of the old system?"

"Contracting is important."

"PGM is just one of many tools."

"We need to see more / greater articulation of the ethos of PGM."

Including workshop contributors, 40 offer advice to the advantage of this study. Here is a selection.

Facilitator / 'weaver' roles and community development perspectives

> 'It is a massive endeavour for the more complex DDM ambitions including PGM, but it is possible to facilitate on one day per week as long as you can also connect in with other skilful community development and youth worker leads. You have to truly let go of the need to make the decisions or be the one to produce the answer. "I want to get it right, not be right" is probably the mind-set.'

'Yes, PGM is good but there are different scales or degrees of PGM and PDM. Quick and dirty approaches can't do everything. You might be able to do something in 6 months, but you need a minimum pre-panel c6 month preparations – which means people coming forward can have early conversations but can't truly be involved in design of the fund, the priorities which 'true PGM or PDM' enables.'

> 'Local people have been taught or don't know that they deserve to make decisions about their lives or the places they live. We have to keep chipping away at the local sentiment by people that say: 'I shouldn't be making these decisions'. PGM – or devolved decision making – or better new language to describe all this – should be looking to encourage personal autonomy and motivation; away from learned helplessness. Power shouldn't be in the hands of specialists. We need to radically democratise the system where more local people are involved in the act of decision making.'

'For this to work you have to deeply listen to what's going on. Acknowledge the hurt, grief, pain – naming it – the trauma in the community. Then find the sparkle! That something special that you can spot and notice – in a person, in a place…a bit like, but not feeling as formal as, a community audit.'

> 'What does it mean to make a decision in your life' needs to be addressed before 'how do you make decisions for the benefit of your community'. You have to get participants to explore 'who has power?', 'who uses power?'

'It takes longer for the community pot to be spent using PGM because it takes a good amount of time to develop relationships – in this case via existing groups where trust had to be built up first like the Men's Group – people in recovery, trauma sufferers, ex-addicts / ex-army members…..but bigger ideas starting to come through now 2-3 years later so not really within 12-18 months as a cautionary tale.'

> 'With PGM and DDM there's a tension between safety, accountability and legality with 'chaos because the current system isn't working'. Can't endorse anything illegal, cause harm and has to make a difference to the community (these were ground rules agreed in our area for the grants).'

'You can face some resistance from local councillors and charities that don't like what you're doing as it is counter to their own way of doing things and feelings that nothing is wrong in a place – or anything public that suggests otherwise.'

> Any regrets? 'Not being able to reach out to people entrenched in power dynamics and walk alongside them e.g., the Heads of the local charities who see us as a competition – maybe could have gone in a different way with them?'

'There's a need for more people being able to do decision making – that capacity needs to be built within communities.'

Funder perspectives

'The best thing about PGM is that it's making a community think about itself and to think it might have options to make decisions for themselves as they are the experts in their community.'

'The group of people that will be making decisions need a bonding, shared relationship experience. Good relationships are what remains and that these people are willing to find a way forward. This is facilitating a shared agreement on how to be together. There can't be judgement in the approach so PGM with the police isn't going to work but fire service with PGM might.'

'Yes, it was invigorating. This has been the most enjoyable experience in 27 years of grant making across different organisations including the Lottery and local government.'

'Bear in mind the additional work needed compared to traditional community grant making and be clear about the intent to pass over power for decision making to someone else.'

'Funders need to be willing to hand over power and the outcomes to someone else – the participants. PGM is more expensive than traditional community grant making programmes.'

'When they get into the role of decision making the community members scrutinised each grant application to the penny – more than we do! We had to work on helping them not feel such accountability to the money in such an extreme way.'

'Be sure to know at the outset whether the intention is for people (citizens) coming forward first to pass on the baton immediately or not after first iteration of PGM – danger of becoming part of the system.'

'It's important for the funder(s) to be open, transparent and clear – about intentions and the money."

'It's more beneficial if the participants are involved in deciding in the design of a fund not just deciding what grants get awarded – the earlier the involvement the better, especially with young people as the bit they felt most uncomfortable with – and needed support with – was the money. Giving away power and supporting youth activism means creating space and lots of learning along the way.'

Lived Experience perspectives

'Yes – those of us involved in York Deciding Together stayed the course, developing deep trust in each other and our collective capability. The conditions were good to share learning. All panels were community panels, all residents and Deep Democracy training really helped – how to make collective decisions. It's all about people from the community working with the community delivering in the community.'

'Devolving power is the right thing to do; needs being met and listened to is better; and it counters the sense of injustice of people making decisions about things they don't experience.'

'It's important to spend time to work out how you are going to make decisions together. It could take 18 months to build relationships and you might not spend any money on community projects / awards in that time.'

"All of us involved feel we will continue and hopefully affect change for some time."

Specific advice for North Yorkshire's further consideration of PGM via the UKSP Fund

'Top tips: Start slow and let it grow – I'm 3 years in and only just starting to develop the level of trust needed for something like PGM as part of DDM to work. Listen deeply – understand trauma, pain and the history of the community. Look after yourselves – our project even paid for 1-2-1 counselling for ourselves as workers as a preventative measure i.e. not in response to feeling ill / burnt out etc done in advance because the work can be hard gathering those stories.' And be prepared to do something differently.'

'Use the ladder of participation as a guide for organisational decision making e.g., North Yorkshire Council should assess where it thinks it is on the ladder currently and where it would like to be (like the Cooperative Foundation did prior to its PGM investment).'

'If you have limited resource, for example, £50,000, the best thing you can do is create space to meet, provide food, hot drinks, biscuits, transport to be free and accessible, childcare, support during day and evening, language/interpreters as necessary – all the conditions for conversations that are inclusive for the people you're trying to put at the heart of the decision making for the future – removing all those practical barriers to get involved. Pay them for their time too (voucher possible to avoid benefits issue in their experience) Reach unconstituted groups e.g. via Social Change Nest[60].'

'It's important to do a lot of intentional work and 1-2-1 conversations in the engagement phase. If the funding organisation doesn't feel they have the requisite relational skills or time for this they should hand that over to someone else who can. It needs introduction and listening exercise work at the start and time to build the contact list prior to community invitations going out.'

'Be careful to let PGM go without a timeline. I would say that without a timeline you might spend all your time in the 'groan zone' (8 breaths) so having a timeline is advised. We said 6 months, 1 session per month and paid people to come to them (25 out of 70 came along each time).'

"If you want to do it, pick a community that can go faster, that's more sophisticated, has some power…but then I wonder what's the point of that! Think about which community you start with that fits you better."

'You could have a youth panel making decisions – that's PGM. That would be a good way of getting something started if it's new to a funder or authority – a pre-existing community of interest.'

'Think about the level of PGM you are ready for. A minimum level of PGM is priority setting by people with lived experience and a panel making decisions. A deeper level is where people are actively designing the forms and the process, shaping the mechanics.'

'If this is brand new to you as a funder or authority then get a team around you that will work with you on it to embed for the future. You need to spread the learning and capability across teams, and if in a Foundation, then your Trustees too.'

'Invest in the weaver role - someone who knows how to build relationships and engage networks. This role is tasked to do research / capacity building in place / with communities of interest as appropriate.'

'Do any new PGM quietly, small, not a song and dance about it as people would think it is performative! Work in a couple of places, start with small pot maybe £50k in each place. • Spend 6 months talking about it working with the grain of the place.'

'Focus on the real value of devolved decision making / PGM which is the way it supports / builds a network of informal relationships – this is vital and is a different focus than the more prevalent service mind-set we see in localities / by local authorities.'

'Be there for the long-term not see this as a short-term thing – see the value of this as helping to surface what's important to local people where they live or in their communities of interest.'

'Think about doing PGM in places like Knaresborough where there's quite a lot of activism in and probably it's a bit under-funded; there's energy there. There are people who would get right on board with this but there will probably be some cynics too, so get them in the space and have some challenge around the process. Maybe somewhere challenging like Colburn - think it would take longer, slightly performative. Maybe Skipton - an interesting place - a bit like Knaresborough - community activism, slightly away from the public gaze, some good charities there like SELFA and in Skipton and Settle you have bottom up community activism. Scarborough feels a bit organisational down whereas Skipton Settle Knaresborough is more community up perhaps. Probably don't do any more in Scarborough, there's already a lot going on and more might over complicate things.'

'Do 6 month pilot wherever you choose – that period at least allows some relationship building within a cohort 'Be available for longer than 3 years when starting this journey.'

'If you're lucky it may take 2 years to get the relationships going, but could be 3 years, 5 years or 10 years. For anything like this, place based work, over that longer term key people can leave and it means re-working relationships.'

'Having people with lived experience in setting priorities is crucial.'

'Have Lived Experience + PGM / PDM facilitation role in place as a minimum mix of ingredients.'

'You have to have a loose framework. As a funder you have to hold on to the legislative bit – how grants are made, eligibility but you have to try and let communities themselves decide what they want to do. In future when engaging communities and ideas as part of the set up a key facet has to be participatory – anything that shuts down or narrows scope limits PGM effectiveness. Start as broad as possible before any narrowing to help the recruitment process for lived experience and to harvest ideas from a broad range of people and interests The potential is there for PGM to draw in people who wouldn't usually come in.'

'Could 10% of North Yorkshire Sport's UKSP Fund active travel project be used for PGM within the specified timescale?'

'How does this look 3-5 years from now – could it involve pooling of budgets, something beyond the local authority or Foundations but with a common cause to increase community empowerment together? And how is participation embedded in the democratic structure - villages need to feel they have got a role here. What do our councillors do to engage everyone in there 93 communities they are responsible for; do they understand what community empowerment is not just use of the locality budgets they have got?

'If it's UK Shared Prosperity Fund then make it truly SHARED!"

What must we know / get right?	*What must we avoid doing?*
'Getting the need and purpose right along with someone who can hold a process will bring the "right" people around the table.' 'Creating the conditions for trust, relationships and mechanisms for listening and safe space to hear others' different opinions to your own.' 'You need trust – in the people and the process. You need willingness to do it differently and be OK with the unknown.' 'Freedom to fail / permission to fail from everyone…but the view that this will be great if relationships form well.' 'Ensuring PGM is not extractive in its approach.' 'It's the right thing to do if you're doing things alongside others, to do with things in their life – trust it's the best thing to do at the time.' 'If you're giving grants using this method it has to be UNCONDITIONAL. The originator must accept that the money goes where it goes.' 'Have to look at this as long-term and deep rather than short-term and shallow; relational and long-term.' 'You need conditions to be supportive for PGM / PDM to work which are: time, care, attention, space, 'human', a gentle approach. And qualities of 'no preciousness' which links to power.' 'It takes time and needs support. Along with the will and desire to do something different.' 'I'm not going to try and dictate and direct in any way what I hoped would happen by handing over power.' 'Whatever the community of benefit needs has to be central to the approach.' 'Need people to be able to divorce themselves from their personal involvement.' 'If you're flattening the hierarchy you've got to flatten your ego - so if you're used to having quite a high profile role in North Yorkshire as an organisation you have genuinely got to commit to having exactly the same weight as someone else. If you can't commit you're not ready to be involved in that process. 'Equity of inclusion is the phrase we're starting to use. We need some principles to emerge don't we?'	'Having an emergent process without a timeline because people need to know what they're engaging with and what their commitment is.' 'As a funder don't expect PGM to work within your timescale.' 'Making the mistake as some people do that just because a person is not in a particular job position they can't make informed decisions.' 'Calling it PGM – better to call it devolved decision making.' 'Being extractive, colonial, funder power and conditions. You're asking for trouble if you just walk into a community with a big bag of money – it feels colonial, extractive, zoological!' 'Don't be gimmicky – short, term or shallow. If you create a panel it could be transformative for the people but if a project ends after 12 months what is for them afterwards?' 'Trying to overload the process in too short a timeframe. For one of our approaches we had so many different systems involved, had great plans but the time pressure to spend the money was unhelpful. The pre work was and is always necessary but we weren't' able to do a full process so learn from those experiences and avoid in future.' 'Holding on to power – making decisions about things we don't experience or understand as well as those in the community of benefit.'

10.0 Chapter 7: Conclusions

1: PGM is feasible in North Yorkshire. We know this because there is evidence of a cluster of active and planned PGM approaches already along the Scarborough Coast and into Ryedale. Thematic PGM relates to ambitions for improving health and wellbeing (including transformation of mental health). Youth-led PGM is also happening in Scarborough. Other place based PGM in the county focuses on aligning to pre-defined outcomes (such as those of Big Local) or local needs and priorities (such as those agreed by the Eastfield Pact which then determines the focus for the locally decided Cash for Causes PGM). There is local expertise too in the form of Foundations who have experience acting as originators and/or intermediaries for administering PGM activity meaning they have professional staff with PGM expertise; who in turn contract in with local expert facilitators with growing experience of PGM across different contexts and systems in the county.

2: The way in which PGM is being funded, enabled and organised differs in each example found in North Yorkshire, York and other parts of the UK.

- The originator of the funding and their drivers, motivations and aspirations for ceding decision making power and resources that they feel are better shifted to those affected most by the issues their funding is designed to serve. Examples include:
  - A national charity seeking to devolve decision making to places they invest in and to create change to the things that perpetuate a system that creates multiple disadvantage.
  - A Community Foundation wishing to achieve more equitable distribution of its funding by targeting places or communities of interest that have traditionally not applied to them for funding
  - A collaborative of foundations wishing to galvanise long-term support for young people's mental health in Scarborough.
  - A foundation wishing to challenge oppressive systems that fail to address entrenched issues relating to racism and social justice.
  - A local entity rooted in creating local opportunity and prosperity for its people enacted through a locally agreed plan based on needs and priorities.

- The scale of resourcing, not only for the grant money 'pot' but the requisite capacity building, community engagement and wider influencing activity that may be desired.
- The recruitment and payment of a paid expert 'weaver' that is responsible on the ground for creating the conditions for more people with lived experience or expertise to become aware of and choose to get involved in deciding things together including grantmaking. This central weaver role might also then need support from expert facilitation professionals that can support the processes of people coming together, learning to trust one another and decide how to decide - long before any actual grant decision making is formulated or made.
- The extent to which the full definition of PGM is being interpreted[1], with some focusing most resource on the community grant decision making process itself. This requires recruitment of a small panel, with limited relationship-building and training activity prior to the process of awarding grants together. This requires fewer processes and resources than other examples found in York and the UK where participants are involved in setting and shaping the goals or agenda for any funding made available by the originator, as well as the PGM model selection, grant criteria setting, decision making processes and participatory reporting as

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[1] Participatory grantmaking cedes decision making power about funding— including the strategy and criteria behind those decisions—to the very communities that funders aim to serve. Source: Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking, 2018

they see fit. This takes more time, money, skills, support and space for learning, failure, re-iteration, learning and improvement.

- The way in which the originator is responsible for the PGM processes, administrative, due diligence and accountability professional processes required or whether they devolve their funding to an intermediary organisation (such as a skilful community foundation) who take on that role, including the recruitment, employment and support of weaver roles and/or contracting facilitation expertise.
- The way in which the call out to a place or a community (of interest / identity) is organised and the techniques for seeking to attract a diversity of people by attitude, experience and voice.
- The PGM model adopted – whether community board (the most common in the UK), representative board (second most common), or as was the case for the York Deciding Together[2] in 2021, a closed collective model (other models exist – see section 7.0).

3: The length of time required for PGM varies from 12 months to 3 years, and ideally forms part of a wider continuum or ambition for local participatory involvement by citizens – especially those whose voices are least heard. The ideal is that PGM is just one approach in a wider toolkit of participatory approaches practised in more communities and contexts and it becomes an embedded part of the local culture of participatory working (for example see Barking and Dagenham's approach known as 'Participatory City' where a whole ecosystem of participation has been developed since 2017).. Respondents suggest that 12 months to 3 years is the timeframe that should be considered for a PGM approach depending on the preconditions and way in which community panellists are engaged, involved, nurtured and their self-determination. The theory is that the greater the strength of their relationships and connection, the more likely the legacy of PGM 'when the money goes.'

4: A UK Landscape Study of the state of PGM in the UK concluded that PGM practices currently sit at the level of 'representative participation[61]' i.e. where communities are given a voice in decision making, but without transforming deeply entrenched structures.

The inference is that PGM in of itself, or on its own, does not appear to shift power to the extent of changing a system, however, the market trend (in the UK) appears to be that more PGM is anticipated over the next 3 years, and that those practising it in the philanthropy sector are keen to move up the 'ladder of participation' through trial, error, further piloting and learning. Contributors to this feasibility study were unanimous in their belief that PGM is the right thing to do, and that without it being included in the toolkit of participatory approaches in North Yorkshire, they struggle to see how wider ambitions to shift power in a meaningful way to people who least have it in their lives will ever change.

5: PGM offers promise, potential and a different value to non-participatory grantmaking alternatives. Whilst it cannot be proved that PGM leads to better decision making, those who have experienced it believe it is worth the additional time, effort and expense for the additional value it creates compared to alternative approaches. They would like to see more PGM in North Yorkshire to complement the existing approaches so that overall more people – particularly the seldom heard people with lived experience and lived expertise - are involved in devolved decision making about issues that affect them.

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[2] Deciding-Together-Funding-evolution-.pdf (tworidingscf.org.uk).

11.0   Chapter 8: Recommendations

1. Discuss the opportunity to collaboratively fund and develop two (2-3 year) PGM pilots in North Yorkshire with The National Lottery, Foundations and funding organisations (e.g. from the Yorkshire Funders Network) that have expertise and / or interest in collaborating with North Yorkshire Council's Localities Team to empower communities over time and address inequalities. These conversations might also usefully lead to solutions for sustainably generating income for community funds whose use might ultimately be decided upon through a PGM approach e.g. place-based giving (see 'London's Giving[3]') or local Lottos (see Harrogate Lotto[4]).

The pilots might be self-selecting as a result of wider community engagement activities in North Yorkshire rather than being pre-selected by any funding organisation. This would be an innovation in current PGM practice where pilots for place based PGM or community of interest PGM are typically determined by the funder/originator in order to meet with their pre-defined mission or purpose.

For example, recent investment in a lived experience impact forum for North Yorkshire being led by the Roundhouse Group will evolve in 2024 such that it has access to **lived experience** and what it describes as 'seldom heard' insight in a range of places and amongst different communities. That work may, alongside pre-existing community engagement activity by other agencies or locality teams, help locate a natural energy amongst people who want not just only their voice to be heard, but to have opportunity to make decisions together. Payment for involvement will encourage engagement and having mechanisms such as Social Change Nest[5] may enable money to reach grassroots (unconstituted) groups that might otherwise be at a disadvantage.

Having funding ready and in place to wrap around that identified energy and desire to make decisions together would be a novel way of approaching a new type of PGM pilot in the county to complement the current portfolio of practices in evidence.

2. Consider the use of UK Shared Prosperity Funding in 2024 and 2025 to prepare for more PGM activity in North Yorkshire for the future.

 a) Develop awareness of PGM as a participatory practice amongst organisations and officers who are currently responsible for community grantmaking in North Yorkshire and / or have the purpose and resources to empower communities through a more devolved way of working – especially in the way they seek to address inequity and meeting the needs of those people that are marginalised.

 b) Support a PGM learning and improvement community of practice starting with a focus on Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale where the existing and planned PGM funders, intermediaries, weavers / facilitators and lived experience experts can learn from each other's approaches and iterate; whilst then opening this CoP to wider interested parties across North Yorkshire where energy and appetite for this approach is located. This requires convening and facilitation support as well as payment for involvement. Members of this community, will ideally, as trust develops, share their different ideas, 'blueprints' and learning to maximise PGM from their experiences ready to share more widely.

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[3] London's Giving | (londonsgiving.org.uk)
[4] The Local Lotto for the Harrogate District | North Yorkshire Council
[5] The Social Change Nest – The Social Change Agency

c) Curate, then communicate, a **North Yorkshire 'PGM practical toolkit**[6]' by taking the best practice already available and contextualising that to meet the likely needs of participants, grantmakers/funders (traditionally paid staff of philanthropic or local or health authorities) and experts (those who have deep knowledge about an issue and formal credentials alongside those with lived experience as experts on issues affecting them) which could enable more PGM activity to be considered and activated in future with confidence. It should cater for different contexts, scope and scale of PGM activity.

d) Make appropriate preparations and invest in relevant PGM 'infrastructure' activity that would ensure any pilots developed for 2025 and beyond are in a state of preparedness because the different **skillsets and mind-sets** required for PGM have been learnt and simulated.

- This might mean for example developing a shared **PGM learning programme** led by those who have experienced it – including those with lived expertise alongside practitioners e.g. local authority, health authority/NHS, foundation and (VCS) infrastructure organisation staff (such as community development workers or equivalent). This essentially prepares staff in these settings to be prepared to 'let go' as the literature describes it and to achieve an appreciation of the advantages and drawbacks of adopting PGM approaches in the future.
- At the same time, the development of a 'support package' that would provide **people with lived experience / citizens** wanting to get involved in PGM when any call out to the community is ready, with a choice of resources, tools and learning material to meet their preferences could be prepared in parallel – and there are existing examples to build from.
- The idea of a PGM **simulation** is an innovation and is designed to provoke interest in a co-created approach amongst willing participants *akin to 'beta testing' in the digital world*. A safe, risk-free environment for trialling approaches and getting used to succeeding and failing in equal measure to learn and improve. All activities should adopt equitable practice in ensuring payment for participation and involvement.

3: Consider embedding more participatory elements into the portfolio of community grants that exist across North Yorkshire

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North Yorkshire Council's Localities Team is bringing all the grant schemes together after May 2024 from legacy Councils. This may reveal (a) further examples of PGM historically involved that hasn't been revealed during this feasibility study and (b) the potential for exploring PGM in any re-designed approach to community grants and associated comprehensive offer to the VCSE sector.

Not all pre-existing community grants will be suitable for a PGM approach but those that are looser in their current purpose and that offer the possibility of residents shaping the design, priorities and its intentionality as well as any community panellist activity might be suitable for evolution. This team is also actively involved in the IVAR open and trusting grant-giving learning process nationally and it is hoped that any evolution of community grants can incorporate PGM learning in this report as well where appropriate i.e. all community grants will exhibit new, improved characteristics.

There may also be other PGM examples beyond those discovered between June 2023 and January 2024. It is recommended that The Localities Team engages with the Yorkshire Funders Network and canvass any examples, past, present or planned for North Yorkshire to further build the potential for collective insight and resourcing in future.

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[6] Perhaps emulating, or improving upon, the Camden Giving PGM Toolkit but contextualised for North Yorkshire as necessary or potentially interpreted differently as a set of practical resources (online or otherwise) for self-peer or guided learning and application.

4: Convene infrastructure / VCSE organisations that have experience and / or a strong intent for incorporating PGM practice in their 'business as usual' approaches to explore their potential role in helping to amplify PGM practice in North Yorkshire.

This recommendation is made without meaning to raise expectation or promise within the VCSE sector, rather to explore where there is pre-existing energy, experience and interest in PGM as a means for infrastructure organisations (potentially community anchor organisations) to become more inclusive in the work they do with communities (of place, interest or affinity).

Examples in this report include:

- North Yorkshire Sport who employ Active Communities Managers that might benefit from incorporating PGM into their toolkit of practice. This in turn would align with their role to support communities to be more active, use sport and physical activity to promote community cohesion and contribute to a reduction in inequalities. A second opportunity relates to NYS' distribution of the UKSP Fund's Active Travel Project, which, whilst time-limited, may offer up opportunity for small-scale pilot PGM activity devolving some of that funding to participants who can be supported to build trust and make decisions together
- Up for Yorkshire: 'Our Zero Selby' exhibits characteristics of participation and shared decision making that whilst not in of itself PGM, shares similarities suggesting there is energy amongst VCSE partners to explore a PGM-related role in future.

This study is inconclusive about the role of Community Anchor Organisations or Community Partnerships in relation to PGM as these structures are dynamically evolving in North Yorkshire. It has been outside the scope of this study and would require dedicated engagement over time to explore further. However, the consultant does note with interest the suggested direction of travel outlined in the 'Trusting Local People; Putting Real Power in the Hands of Communities' report by Local Trust (February 2023) that references the role of Community Anchor Organisations to support resident-led community governance and the principle of any improved system to include 'participation: devolution of decision-making responsibility to the lowest geographical level possible. The same report recommends the transfer of resources and power to communities, and PGM would be a contributory way of exhibiting this:

> 'The Big Local programme demonstrates what communities in deprived or 'left behind' neighbourhoods can achieve if given a relatively small annual budget to improve their areas. It shows the power of delegating funding to local communities to engage in project planning and delivery – the services and facilities that result are tailored to local need and tend to achieve greater traction and better outcomes. **More funding, particularly aimed at levelling up, such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, should be delegated to local communities in this way**. Community partners – once recognised as demonstrating appropriate accountability, transparency and community engagement by the local authority – could provide the distribution mechanism.'

This is referenced to recognise that PGM is just one small, but potentially useful means of complementing other ideas for shifting power and resources to communities[7], and that in situating any of the recommendations in the study, the Localities Team and any wider readership must seek to integrate them alongside these wider developments in North Yorkshire. This, in part, links to the final recommendation next.

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[7] Learning from the Teams and Dunston DDM example in this study there has been a role for VCSEs not in grantmaking, rather in hosting 'Bridge Builder' posts that have materialised as a legacy of that local approach, and who form part of local decision making panels with other residents. These VCSEs are now referred to as 'keystone organisations'.

5. Encourage a system-wide intent to become more participatory in North Yorkshire.

This recommendation falls without the scope of this UKSP Fund focused feasibility study, but in conducting this work the consultant has identified a range of resources and approaches that North Yorkshire Council and many other organisations that hold traditional power and resources could learn from and steadily embed in their practices over time.

This recommendation is essentially a call to action for incremental improvement in participatory approaches across North Yorkshire – moving each part of the system up the ladder of participation in effect, and intentionally making efforts to be more participatory over time. This is the sort of journey that Barking and Dagenham Council and community partners have been on in their 'Participatory City' (and participatory investment) approach, but it is still developing and has benefited from over £7 million of investment and a complex systems change narrative.

For those who might feel overwhelmed by this example, there are a range of organisations and PGM 'experts' that have provided resources to help local authorities and other organisations to increase participation in their work, their services and their relationships. This, from Cynthia Gibson specifically in relation to making decision making more participatory:

> 'The good news is that funders that may not be able to immediately (or perhaps ever) hand over decisions about grantmaking, have several options for incorporating meaningful participation in their work before, during, and after those decisions are made. They can also experiment with participatory grantmaking in one or two programme areas to see whether and how it works for them. Internally, they can institute hiring policies that favour participatory experience; encourage staff to collaborate across programs; involve staff from all ranks in policy discussions; and stipulate a number of board seats for peers. And they can support field building through research on and evaluation of the approach.'

Helpfully, the National Lottery's 2023 PGM UK Landscape Mapping Study provides examples too of how to embed participatory approaches into different aspects of organisational practice including: their **governance** practices e.g. through their Board or advisory groups; **strategy development** processes at an organisational level; **grantmaking processes**; and **diversity, equality and inclusion** approaches. For organisations seeking to build more participation into their existing approaches these learning lessons will be especially useful and are worth reading in more detail[62].

Resourcing and timing implications: Guide only: £350,000 April 2024 to March 2029.

If resources were available to support recommendations 1-4 it is anticipated that a period of **April 2024 to March 2029** would be required in order that PGM pilots are not tokenistic and are instead based on the good practice identified in the feasibility study. To take the recommendations forward would require relational expertise impacting NYC Localities Team Officer time i.e. it would need to form part of at least one, preferably two officers' job descriptions and role – 0.1 FTE per Officer.

This would be to support the convening, curating and learning role recommendations but NOT the actual PGM weaver or facilitation roles. They might also oversee preparatory work to March 2025 (the current expiry date for UKSP Fund which has a condition of full defrayal limiting the ability for longer-term aspects of this study to be funded through this source). However, capacity may be a constraint and another organisation could be better placed to take this forward if funded to do so.

The ideal would be a collaborative, collectivised resourcing of PGM activity in North Yorkshire with the likely use of an intermediary organisation with PGM, PDM or DDM experience that could be responsible for the suggested PGM pilots when self-selecting communities identify themselves as wanting to come together, make decisions together including grantmaking.

This may mean exploring the use of Levelling Up[8] funding alongside philanthropic contributions and / or the use of endowments to further aims linked to reducing inequalities and increasing community empowerment in meaningful ways.

Activity	Guide budgets only and subject to further deliberation with other funders
Infrastructure preparation	£90,000 – could be commissioned via UKSP Fund to appropriate suppliers of expertise (convening time & space, lived experience connection, community of practice facilitation, skills sharing, learning programme, curation of practical resources, PGM simulation)
Pilot 1 (intentionally small scale) **Indicative timeframe only: April 2025 to March 2028**	£130,000 – of which 30% cost to run;' 70% for community pot to decide on how to spend the money. This is to enable a selected expert intermediary organisation or collaborative of such organisations to activate a pilot in an area of North Yorkshire that does not currently have PGM activity in place (or has embryonic practice) but possesses positive preconditions for PGM to likely have potential. Ideally any selection of place is informed by other activity in the county such as the Roundhouse project to amplify the voices of lived experience.
Pilot 2 **Indicative timeframe only: April 2026 to March 2029**	£130,000 – of which 20% cost to run and 80% for community pot to decide on how to spend the money. As above and / or to enable at least one local infrastructure organisation to trial a thematic or place based PGM pilot if it has been proven that they have a role to play in embedding this into their business as usual practice and can see a means of sustainable income generation rather than relying on short-term funding for PGM to happen.
Total (guide only and exclusive of any local authority officer time and costs	£350,000. This figure would enable the recommendations to be activated as imagined but conversations across funding organisations may identify additional resources and opportunities as well as, importantly, the identification of sustainable income model opportunities e.g. North Yorkshire lotto, place-based giving or similar.
The pilots could always be scaled down in resourcing terms. Some respondents said during this study a pot of £50,000 for a small pilot would be feasible excluding the costs to run the programme and the preparatory community engagement activity. 18 months might be feasible for small-scale test and learn activity but would strike some respondents as potentially too short-termist to succeed.	

Complementing the resourcing above (requiring new money) would be the incremental participatory aspects of the 'harmonised' community grants that will be considered by the NYC Localities Team from legacy Councils in May 2024. This may mean PGM activity is possible to activate without finding new money, rather it may happen as a consequence of those pre-existing community grant schemes evolving towards a more participatory approach and / or an explicit intention to repurpose them as PGM for the future. Communities affected by the grants should have a say in what they feel would most benefit them, their place or situation especially where any grant is aimed at addressing inequalities or marginalisation in society.

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[8] [Levelling Up Fund Round 3: explanatory and methodology note on the decision making process - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)

Appendix 1: List of contributors to this PGM feasibility study

Key to abbreviations. PWLE = People With Lived Experience

YORK DECIDING TOGETHER DEEP DIVE

Ali Spaul	StreetGames
Jan Garrill	Two Ridings Foundation
Astrid Hanlon	PWLE, LIFE Group
Miles Goring	PWLE, LIFE Group
Kenny Lieske	Good Organisation

TEAMS AND DUNSTON DEEP DIVE

Andrew Ballinger	Ballinger Charitable Trust
Joe Doran	Lankelly Chase
Andy Crosbie	Collective Impact Agency
Chrisine Frazer	Bridge Builder

SCARBOROUGH / RYEDALE / MENTAL HEALTH DEEP DIVE

Karen Atkinson	NYC
Trevor Mahon	SeeCHANGE Project
Rebecca Blakey (Bex)	SeeCHANGE Project
Bill Chatt	Barrowcliff resident
Matthew Joseph	NYC
Kerry Ann	NYC
Louise Morgan	NYC
Michelle Smith	Thrive Lab
Ewan Muirhead	Thrive Lab
Thomas Waring	Two Ridings Foundation
Sarah Norman	Two Ridings Foundation
Paddy Chandler	NYC
Lisa Holden	PWLE (including mental health)
Keith Marsen	PWLE (including mental health)
Judith Webster	PWLE (including mental health)

OTHER STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

Nils Stronach	Community Foundation Tyne & Wear
David Watson	North Yorkshire Sport
Leah Swain	Woodsmith Foundation
Gemma Scire	Woodsmith Foundation
Louise Snelders	Coop Foundation
Kate McLaven	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Abdou Sidibe	Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Paul Varney	The National Lottery
Caroline O'Neill	Community First Yorkshire
Carole Roberts	Community First Yorkshire

The NYC Stronger Communities Team: Marie-Ann Jackson, Adele Wilson-Hope, Amber Graver, Karen Atkinson, Paddy Chandler, Lucy Moss-Blundell, Tom Atkinson and Liz Meade.

Many thanks to these 40 contributors.

Appendix 2: Useful PGM resources and repositories

[Resources (notion.site)](#)

This site contains **95 resources** (when last accessed for this study on the 19th of January 2024) organised across these classifications.

🎯 **Case Study**   📝 **Report**   🔒 **How to**   📢 **Community Voice**   📺**Webinar**

Candid Learning for Funders offers a suite of resources that delve into the what, how, and why of PGM. It includes insights from various participatory grantmakers and explores the benefits, challenges, and strategies for engaging in PGM. The resources also feature descriptions of how different funders engage in PGM and offer a collection of online media produced on this topic .Resources are found here: [Practical wisdom for funders | Candid Learning for Funders](#)
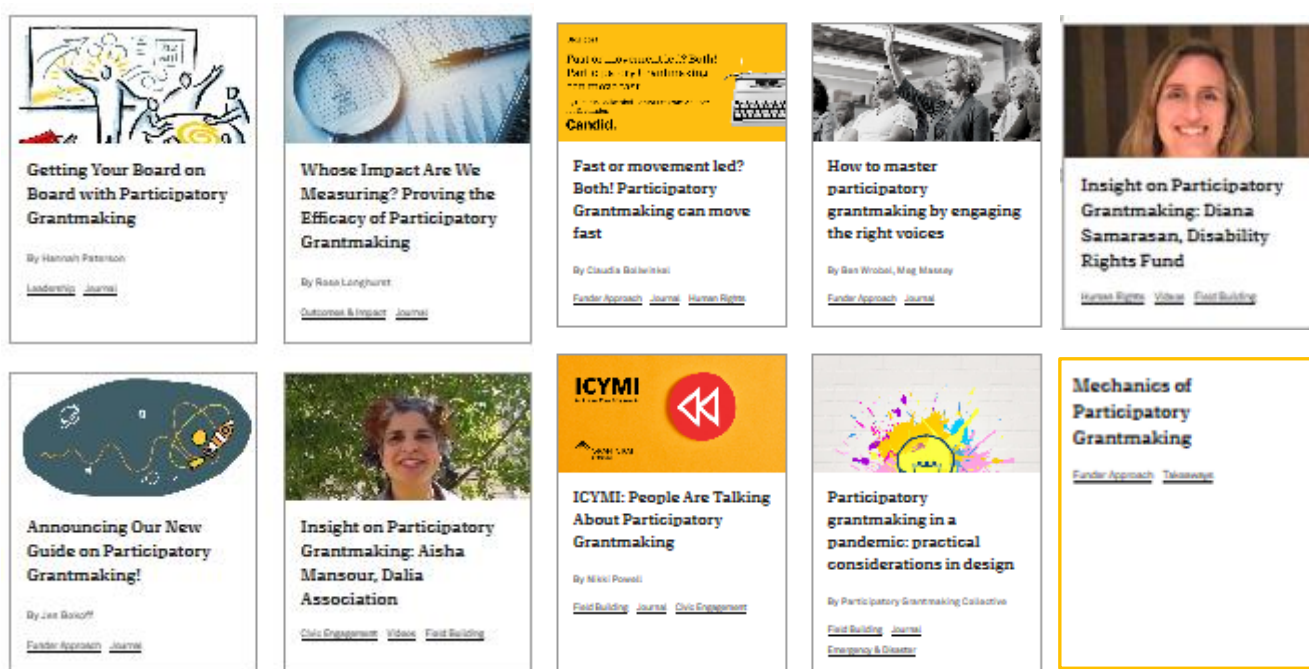
'For any grantmaker looking to get started, we recommend Candid's terrific guide, **Deciding Together,** which provides specific advice for funders considering participatory approaches. It offers guidelines for how to support existing participatory funds, and how to get started with a pilot in your own institution, including common concerns and roadblocks—from setting expectations with a board of trustees to mitigating possible conflicts of interest. See also: [Watch the video on YouTube]'
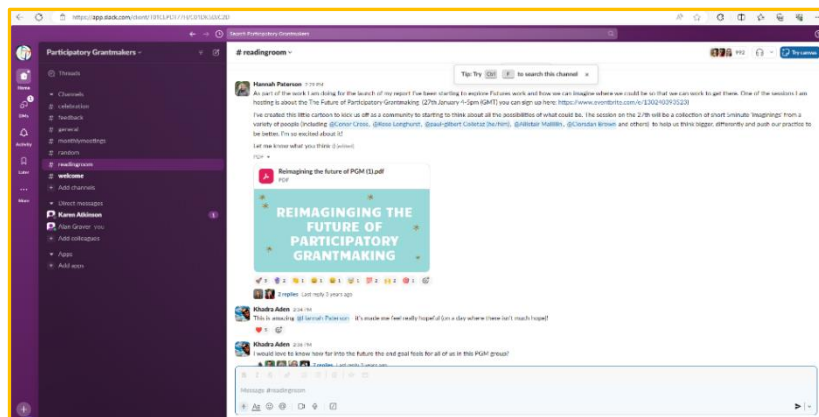
[PGM Resources (participatorygrantmaking.org)](#): 'Founded in March 2020 as an informal group of a dozen people, the Participatory Grantmaking Community has grown to more than 1,400 people in 73 different countries. Access to free resources such as PGM primers and tools to help PGM 'newcomers' find practical ways of getting started and guidance aimed at supporting the expansion of PGM practice amongst participants[63].
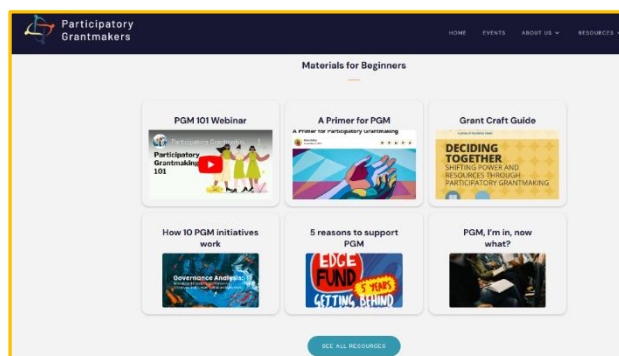
The Participatory Grantmakers global community of practice is a dynamic forum for sharing learning, latest insights and opportunities. For anyone interested in PGM – whether novice or established in the practice – joining their dedicated Slack channel is highly recommended:

[general - Participatory Grantmakers - 1 new item - Slack](#)

'[Participatory Grantmaking Toolkit from London Funders and Camden Giving](#)'[64] last updated in May 2023.

'A Better Way' Network – has a range of useful resources linked to the theme of sharing and building power including a specific focus on participatory Grantmaking (February 2022) [Sharing and building power: participatory grantmaking — A Better Way](#)
[Publications — A Better Way](#)

GrantCraft and Governance Lab
https://medium.com/open-grantmaking-innovations and www.grantcraft.org

Diversity, equity and inclusion resources

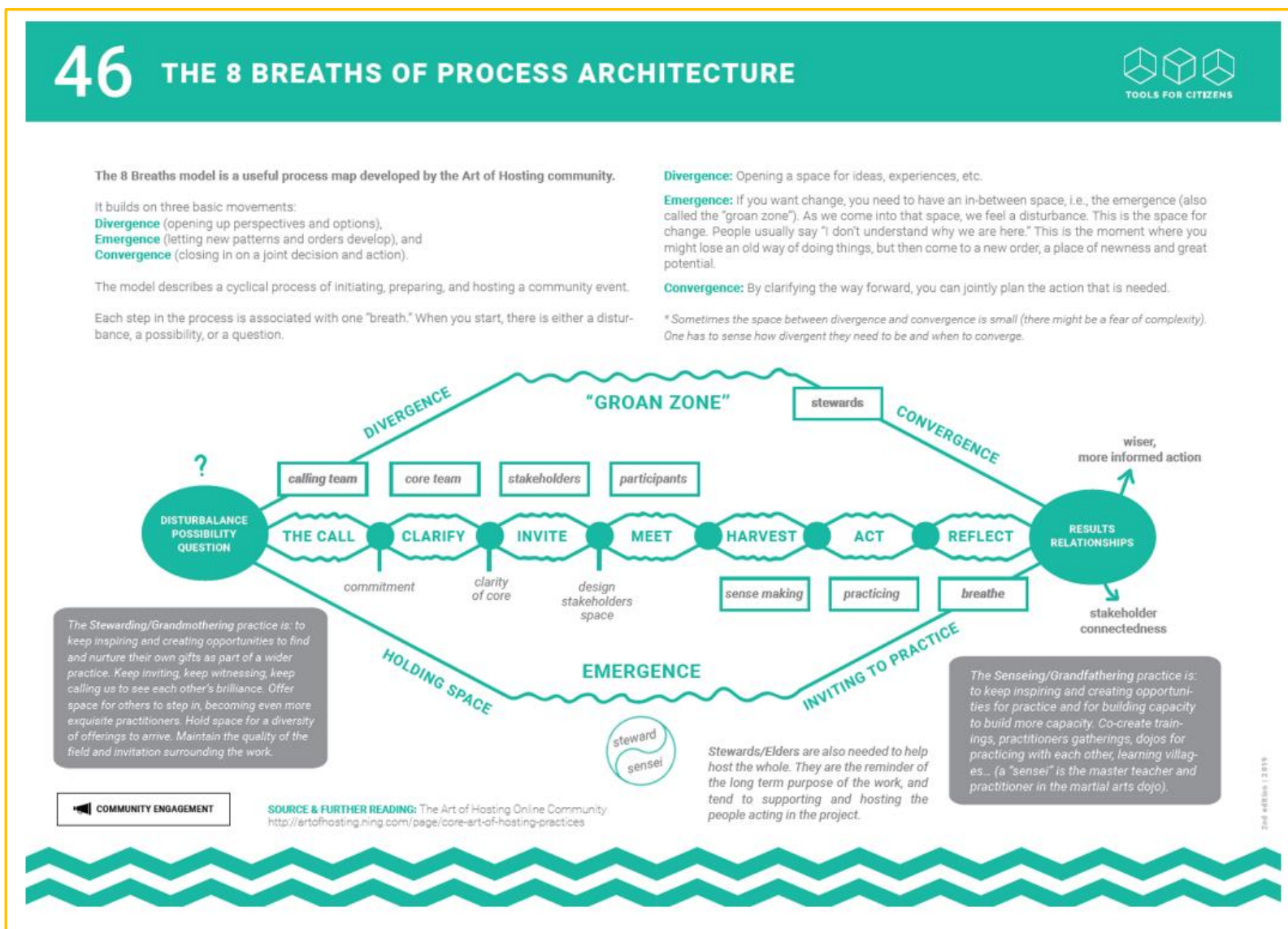### Resources on equity in PGM and other types of grantmaking

This survey alone cannot do justice to the vast topic of equity in PGM. Here we highlight several resources that provide further information on this topic.

- Digging Deeper - A call for scaled, sustained, and engaged investment into racial justice, by the Baobab Foundation, 2021: https://www.baobabfoundation.org.uk/news/digging-deeper-a-call-for-scaled-sustained-and-engaged-investment-into-racial-justice
- Using a Racial Justice Lens in Grantmaking Around the Globe, by Lori Villarosa, 2020: https://racialequity.org/2020/08/using-a-racial-justice-lens-in-grantmaking-around-the-globe/
- The Power of Participatory Grantmaking to Advance Racial Equity: Part I and Part II by the Giving Practice, 2021: https://philanthropynw.org/news/power-participatory-grantmaking-advance-racial-equity-part-i
- Three lessons learned from a holistic shift to participatory grantmaking, by Jocelynne Rainey, 2023: https://philanthropynewsdigest.org/features/commentary-and-opinion/three-lessons-learned-from-a-holistic-shift-to-participatory-grantmaking?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Candid%20Newsletter%20-%20All%20Subscribers&utm_campaign=CAN-M-01-19-2023
- Grantmaking with a racial equity lens, by Grantcraft, 2018: https://learningforfunders.candid.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/12/equity.pdf

Examples of funders/networks with an equity & justice focus
- [Baobab Foundation](#)
- [Funders for Race Equality Alliance](#)

Appendix 3: The 8 breaths of process architecture

46 THE 8 BREATHS OF PROCESS ARCHITECTURE

TOOLS FOR CITIZENS

The 8 Breaths model is a useful process map developed by the Art of Hosting community.

It builds on three basic movements:
Divergence (opening up perspectives and options),
Emergence (letting new patterns and orders develop), and
Convergence (closing in on a joint decision and action).

The model describes a cyclical process of initiating, preparing, and hosting a community event.

Each step in the process is associated with one "breath." When you start, there is either a distur-bance, a possibility, or a question.

Divergence: Opening a space for ideas, experiences, etc.

Emergence: If you want change, you need to have an in-between space, i.e., the emergence (also called the "groan zone"). As we come into that space, we feel a disturbance. This is the space for change. People usually say "I don't understand why we are here." This is the moment where you might lose an old way of doing things, but then come to a new order, a place of newness and great potential.

Convergence: By clarifying the way forward, you can jointly plan the action that is needed.

* Sometimes the space between divergence and convergence is small (there might be a fear of complexity). One has to sense how divergent they need to be and when to converge.

DIVERGENCE — "GROAN ZONE" — stewards — CONVERGENCE

wiser, more informed action

?

calling team | core team | stakeholders | participants

DISTURBALANCE POSSIBILITY QUESTION — THE CALL — CLARIFY — INVITE — MEET — HARVEST — ACT — REFLECT — RESULTS RELATIONSHIPS

commitment | clarity of core | design stakeholders space | sense making | practicing | breathe

stakeholder connectedness

The Stewarding/Grandmothering practice is: to keep inspiring and creating opportunities to find and nurture their own gifts as part of a wider practice. Keep inviting, keep witnessing, keep calling us to see each other's brilliance. Offer space for others to step in, becoming even more exquisite practitioners. Hold space for a diversity of offerings to arrive. Maintain the quality of the field and invitation surrounding the work.

HOLDING SPACE — EMERGENCE — INVITING TO PRACTICE

steward / sensei

Stewards/Elders are also needed to help host the whole. They are the reminder of the long term purpose of the work, and tend to supporting and hosting the people acting in the project.

The Senseing/Grandfathering practice is: to keep inspiring and creating opportunities for practice and for building capacity to build more capacity. Co-create train-ings, practitioners gatherings, dojos for practicing with each other, learning villag-es... (a "sensei" is the master teacher and practitioner in the martial arts dojo).

2nd edition | 2019

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SOURCE & FURTHER READING: The Art of Hosting Online Community http://artofhosting.ning.com/page/core-art-of-hosting-practices

Appendix 4: How much does it cost to do PGM?

These are examples only and can only be thought of as a guide as each PGM context will differ as will the amount of funding available to invest in the various processes involved.
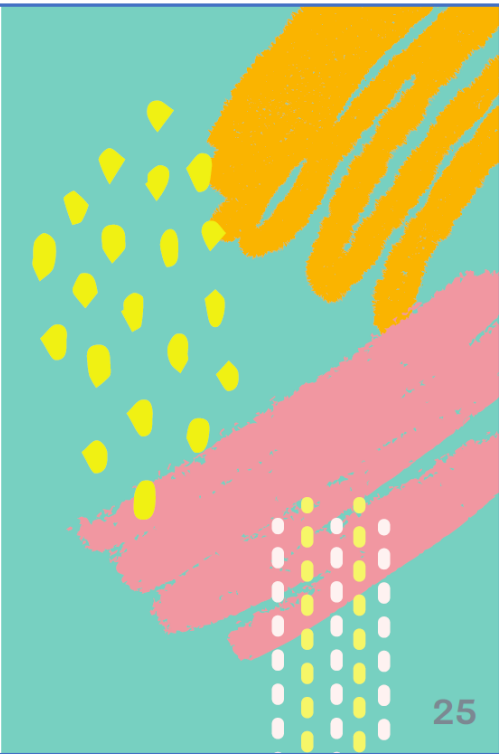
Example 1: Camden Giving, 2023

RESOURCING PGM

The PGM process delivers outcomes beyond the outcomes of the funding itself, so it should be resourced accordingly.

As a rough guide, in 2023 it cost around £17,500 to run one round of participatory grantmaking, including grant administration, working on the basis we will distribute £100,000. This is reflective of inflation increases that affect both organisational costs and direct costs relative to delivering participatory grantmaking.

Some costs you may need to consider:

- Paying panellists* for training, reviewing grants, making decisions and evaluating the experience
- Changes to your grant-giving portal or system to make it easily accessible for panel members
- The cost of running payroll for the panellists
- Staff time to recruit, train and support panellists
- Devices, digital tools and internet access so digitally excluded panellists can take part
- Covering costs that make it possible such as childcare, carers, access requirements, and translators
- A fee for any partners who will help co-deliver the fund or supplement the panel's experiences to aid their decision making. For example, safeguarding leads, referral partners, external facilitators

*It's important to acknowledge the current socio-economic environment we operate in as PGM organisations. We ensure that we compensate panellists above the London Living Wage as a true wage for the work they deliver as knowledge experts. Payment should also be reflective of annual increases to inflation and it's even more important to consider paying a fair wage in light of the cost of living crisis, which burdens many panellists.

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Example 2: Anonymised at request of contributor

The total cost of the PGM projects comprised:

- £75,000 for 18 months of community developer expertise to facilitate community engagement on the ground, build trust (i.e. 36% of total budget)
- £130,000 community pot of funding for panellists to decide how to spend (64% of total budget)

Within the first two years the £75,000 community development funding expired, and by that point c£20,000 of the community pot had been used, deemed a much slower rate of getting money into communities compared to traditional approaches. However, further community ideas – increasingly larger in scale too – have started to come through meaning that the community pot will ultimately be used but important at the pace the community wishes.

Example 3: Anonymised at request of contributor

'Compared to traditional community grantmaking, we would usually pitch to a donor that we could have something up and running within 12 weeks. For PGM it's probably closer to 10 months at a minimum. If pitching a grants programme to a donor you would pitch 15% (for our operating costs and everything associated with running the programme), but for PGM you would probably need to pitch and cost at 25%. It might become more efficient over time with more PGM approaches in more places and where it becomes the norm.'

One of the topics that contributors to this study were most curious about was payment for involvement. This topic deserves more attention than this study can hope to cover, but usefully here is some insight from the Camden Giving toolkit.

The consultant also met a PWLE who has specialised in this aspect of PGM who could make an excellent contribution, alongside the new policy expected to develop in 2024 in York – events to socialise the policy and finalise its approach commence in February 2024:

[Payment for Involvement — York MCN](#)

Other resources are also available on this topic.

[Payment guidance for researchers and professionals | NIHR](#)

[Paying people with lived experience for their participation (scottishhumanrights.com)](#)

[1] A compelling quote from one of the respondents generously sharing their rationale for PGM in their locality as part of this feasibility study in 2023/24

[2] Deciding Together | Candid Learning for Funders

[3] Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking, Grantcraft a service of Foundation Centre, 2018

[4] How to master participatory grantmaking (candid.org)

[5] Cynthia Gibson, Ph.D., is a consultant who has worked with hundreds of philanthropic institutions and major nonprofits in strategic planning, program development, evaluation, and communications. She is also a widely published author on a wide range of issues related to philanthropy and the nonprofit sector, civic engagement, and democratic participation. In 2007, Cynthia helped design, oversee, and evaluate one of the first participatory grantmaking initiatives undertaken by a national foundation, the Case Foundation's "Make it Your Own" program.

[6] Moving beyond Feedback: The Promise of Participatory Grantmaking - Non Profit News | Nonprofit Quarterly

[7] Participatory Grantmaking Building the Evidence For Paul Ramsay Foundation by the Centre for Evidence and Implementation (Australia), May 2023

[8] Monitoring and evaluating participatory grantmaking, Discussion paper for the Baring Foundation, prepared by Ceri Hutton, January 2016

[9] Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking

[10] Participatory Grantmaking Building the Evidence For Paul Ramsay Foundation by the Centre for Evidence and Implementation (Australia), May 2023, Foreword Inspiring better philanthropy Jack Heath, CEO, Philanthropy Australia

[11] In *Who Decides?* by the Lafayette Practice eight more nuanced benefits are identified from its review of eight funds which amplify this point. They are: *1)* Is more accountable to intended beneficiaries *2)* Is preferred by intended beneficiaries *3)* Sets priorities well aligned with what the field needs *4)* Can identify grantmaking priorities and grantmaking opportunities that non-participatory models would miss *5)* Makes better investment decisions *6)* Can be efficiently run *7)* Can ensure a dynamic evolution of who participates and leads *8)* Can mobilize additional funding for the field.

[12] Monitoring and evaluating participatory grantmaking, Discussion paper for the Baring Foundation, prepared by Ceri Hutton, January 2016

[13] Flexibility: 'We change the way we work to suit the needs of individuals. Respect: 'The knowledge of communities is the most precious knowledge we can use, respecting it leads to better outcomes for everyone. Justice: 'It is just that marginalised communities have control over things that affect them'. Evolution: 'We know we haven't found all the answers, but we're doing our best to keep evolving and improving our practices.

[14] Participatory Grantmaking Toolkit from London Funders and Camden Giving | London's Giving (londonsgiving.org.uk)

[15] A Primer for Participatory Grantmaking - Non Profit News | Nonprofit Quarterly

[16] Monitoring and evaluating participatory grantmaking, Discussion paper for the Baring Foundation, prepared by Ceri Hutton

[17] 'In terms of collecting evidence on outcomes, moving from a theory of change to outcome mapping model (with associated open-ended exploration and an increased capacity to self-define) may be a useful shift', Baring Foundation 2016

[18] For example see the 'reports' section of Resources (notion.site)

[19] Report: Participatory grantmaking - Building the evidence | ceiglobal.org

[20] For decades, practitioners and scholars in those fields have grappled with how to engage ordinary people in decision making that goes beyond asking them for feedback and/or input to seeing them as actors in all facets of planning, implementing, assessing, and developing efforts to strengthen communities. Source: Moving beyond Feedback: The Promise of Participatory Grantmaking - Non Profit News | Nonprofit Quarterly, August 2019

[21] Participatory grantmaking matters now more than ever - Ford Foundation

[22] Sharing and Shifting Power: Lessons from Participatory Grantmaking - MacArthur Foundation (macfound.org)

[23] CASE_MIYO_researchReport_39092d.indd (casefoundation.org)

[24] CASE_MIYO_researchReport_39092d.indd (casefoundation.org)

[25] Participatory Grantmaking: Has its time come? Cynthia Gibson, October 2017, page 21

[26] Cultivating Community Engagement Panel, *Engaging Residents: A New Call to Action for Community Foundations* (Kansas City, MO: CFLeads, July 2013).

[27] Paul Ramsay Foundation – Peer to Peer Program. The Paul Ramsay Foundation created the Peer to Peer Program in partnership with Philanthropy Australia and Social Impact Hub as an innovative form of philanthropy where organisations work together on projects and successful grantees are determined by the applicants themselves.Ten organisations with ten new well-formed ideas to help break the cycle of disadvantage came together to collectively develop and evaluate each proposal before determining the five ideas that would receive funding. Video of participating organisations available.

[28] How to master participatory grantmaking by engaging the right voices | Candid Learning for Funders

[29] 14 June 2023: **VIEW WEBINAR recording**

[30] A Husted et al. (2021) landscape study of foundations found that these were the top benefits ascribed to the approach.

[31] FundAction values: We are guided by the following core values: democracy, inclusivity, openness, peer-to-peer working, transparency, trust, respect and autonomy. Our values determine how we run our processes and how we decide and engage with each other in the FundAction community

[32] Whose Impact Are We Measuring? Proving the Efficacy of Participatory Grantmaking | Candid Learning for Funders

[33] One theory of change for participatory philanthropy including PGM is that the participation of non-grantmakers in decisions on important issues strengthens communities overall because individuals and groups that are directly affected by those decisions are connected, informed and engaged. Participatory Grantmaking, Has its Time Come, Cynthia Gibson, October 2017 page 20

[34] UK PGM Survey_National Lottery Community Fund Final Report_FINAL - Google Slides

[35] Big Local outcomes: The outcomes set for Big Local at its outset were deliberately broad:* Communities will be better able to identify local needs and take action in response to them. *People will have increased skills and confidence, so that they continue to identify and respond to needs in the future. *The community will make a difference to the needs it prioritises. * People will feel that their area is an even better place to live.* About Big Local - Local Trust

[36] Trusting Local People: Putting real power in the hands of communities, February 2023 and 'Reforming neighbourhood governance to realise community potential, July 2022.

[37] See Cynthia Gibson, *Participatory Grantmaking: Has Its Time Come?* (New York: Ford Foundation, 2017), 26.

[38] Moving beyond Feedback: The Promise of Participatory Grantmaking - Non Profit News | Nonprofit Quarterly

[39] Sharing and building power: participatory grantmaking — A Better Way

[40] London's Giving | (londonsgiving.org.uk) - A Place Based Giving Scheme (PBGS) is a partnership, initiative, or organisation which understands, highlights, and responds to local needs. It brings new resources and approaches into a borough and creates better

solutions through working together. Key activities include some or all of fundraising, volunteering, in-kind giving, grantmaking, capacity-building, influencing and convening.

[41] Participatory Grantmaking Toolkit from London Funders and Camden Giving | London's Giving (londonsgiving.org.uk)

[42] Revolutionising community funding processes through co-design and participation – Bristol City Council | Local Government Association

[43] Rank launches Plymouth Participatory Grant Making Programme - The Rank Foundation

[44] Source Participatory Grantmaking presentation by Hannah Peterson whilst at The National Lottery

[45] Source (right): Participatory grantmaking: rethinking our role as funder | Aidsfonds.org

[46] Participatory Grantmaking: Has its time come? Cynthia Gibson, October 2017

[47] Participatory Grantmaking: Has its time come? Cynthia Gibson, October 2017, page 21

[48] Communities will be better able to identify local needs and take action in response to them. People will have increased skills and confidence, so that they continue to identify and respond to needs in the future. The community will make a difference to the needs it prioritises. People will feel that their area is an even better place to live.

[49] Our Zero Selby Pilot Phase — Our Zero Selby

[50] Our+Zero+Selby+Impact+Report+-+June+2022.pdf (squarespace.com)

[51] The Local Lotto for the Harrogate District | North Yorkshire Council and Donate to THE LOCAL FUND for the Harrogate district - Two Ridings Community Foundation (tworidingscf.org.uk)

[52] THE LOCAL FUND Impact Report 23 (tworidingscf.org.uk)

[53] Overview – Lankelly Chase

[54] THE ROYAL FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES LONG-TERM MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCARBOROUGH - Royal Foundation: 'The [£345,000] funding will be divided between local organisations over the long term to increase the support they can provide for young people's mental health and wellbeing. This will include boosting the provision of measures such as safe spaces, sports and outdoor activities, youth work, creative workshops, mentoring and detached youth work which sees organisations going to locations where young people are.'

[55] 'Our working definition of 'diverse' is people who have experience of being marginalised in society due to their race, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status or any other attribute that impacts their inclusion.' Future Communities Fund - Co-op Foundation (coopfoundation.org.uk)

[56] 'For example there might be people that form an anti-racism collective. The funder might provide money to fund that collective to have a weaver person that builds a network of people who will involve themselves in anti-racism. It could be c£10k get people together in some space have fun making some decisions about small grants, then say we're going to have a place-based wide programme for deep PGM.'

[57] £218,000 given out to 20 projects to bring ground-breaking system change for people in York - Two Ridings Community Foundation (tworidingscf.org.uk)

[58] 'Kopano is part of participatory grantmaking. These conversations frame the funding discussions, peer reviewers [will often] come from this group of attendees… the conversations push the movement and communities to improve proposals and decisions. Relationships can be made that improve partnership, accountability and quality of decisions and proposals.' (Hannah Peterson)

[59] https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1EzZ8NyADzvU_jy3fTF24Aqc5R2zmxxF_uypcfE9BVG8/edit?usp=sharing and Participatory Grantmaking (PGM): UK Landscape Survey by Alex Martins on Prezi Next

[60] This CIC is the non-profit sister to The Social Change Agency The Social Change Nest – The Social Change Agency

[61] See Arnstein's Ladder of Participation

[62] https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1EzZ8NyADzvU_jy3fTF24Aqc5R2zmxxF_uypcfE9BVG8/edit?usp=sharing and Participatory Grantmaking (PGM): UK Landscape Survey by Alex Martins on Prezi Next

[63] PGM Resources (participatorygrantmaking.org)

[64] Participatory Grantmaking Toolkit from London Funders and Camden Giving | London's Giving (londonsgiving.org.uk)