

Scottish Expert Advisory Panel on the Collaborative Economy



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Angus Council

Part of the Funding, Policy and Projects team within Economic Development and responsible for advice and support to Council teams, businesses, community groups, and individuals to identify local, national and European funding opportunities. Liaises with funders to identify opportunities for Angus to attract investment, support business development and supports local communities. Supporting individuals, businesses and community groups throughout Angus create successful Crowdfund Angus campaigns.

Crowdfund Angus

The Funding, Policy and Project team within Angus Council have a proven track record of delivering a variety of local, national and EU funding streams. With competition for funding and grants becoming harder and Local Authority budgets reducing a gap was identified in the funding support available. We explored local and national solutions and Crowdfunding was identified as an exciting and innovative way forward for Angus Council. After a period of consultation a committee report was submitted to Elected Members to approve the concept and to create the portal.

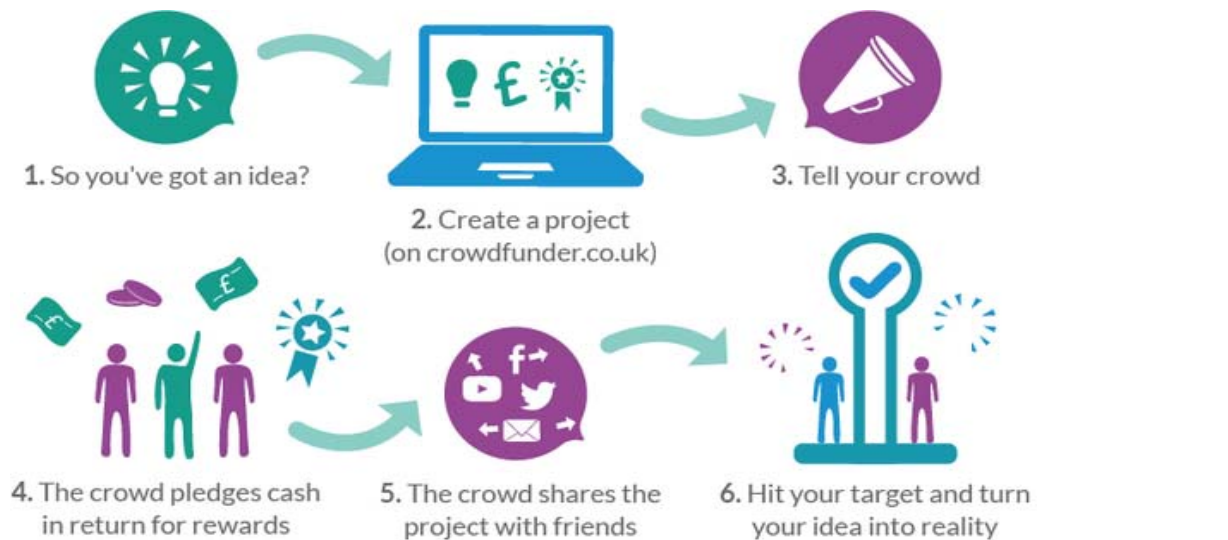
A steering group between local community organisations, businesses, individuals and Dundee & Angus College was formed and engagement with Crowdfunder began to create a bespoke crowdfunding platform that allows businesses, individuals and community groups to campaign for funding to achieve their goals.

Crowdfund Angus was launched in August 2015 with four pilot projects which were a mixture of different themes; Fireworks for Arbroath, a local community group used Crowdfund Angus to successfully bring back the popular fireworks display to Arbroath, total raised £2,100. Bygone Gardens, a dementia based charity raised £2,000 to create bespoke dementia gardens. Following dreams, a local Paralympic from Kirriemuir used the platform to raise funds to purchase her own racing wheelchair. And lastly the Bon Scott statue, our most successful project to date, DD8 a local music group raised fund to erect a statue of AC/DC frontman Bon Scott who lived in Kirriemuir. In the first 3 months 40% of the pledges came from Europe and Australia, this made us realise the International potential Crowdfunding held for projects. To date Crowdfund Angus has supported thirty two projects on the portal and has raised over £142,934 to date.

From April 2017 the Angus Council Community Grant scheme has been used as a match fund for Crowdfund Angus bringing a host of benefits to both Angus Council and applicants.

How it works

What's involved? The Angus Crowdfund Portal in Action



Stages	Support Available
1. Idea?	Contact Angus council funding team for support/advice. Teleconference with Crowdfund UK where needed
2. Create Project	Funding team help with story board. Contacts for help with promotional films where required. No campaign launched until all parties happy.
3. Tell your crowd	Angus Council help with social media messaging to reach as wide an audience as possible. Further support from Crowdfund UK where needed.
4. The crowd pledges cash in return for rewards	Rewards can be amended, broadened where a campaign takes off quickly.
5. Crowd shares project with friends	Marketing base for new company/business/community group is grown as campaign grows. Loyal customer base already growing.
6. Hit target	Celebrate. If business, further business advice available through economic development service.

The Strategic Fit:

Our portal fits with the Angus Community Planning vision of 'Angus is place people want to live, work and visit' and to the Single Outcome Agreement principles of - Prosperous and Fair, Learning and Supportive, Safe and Strong, Caring and Healthy and Sustainable. Under the Scottish Governments Economic Strategy our Crowdfund Angus portal supports the four I's:-

Investment –encouraging more funding into Angus and Scotland as a whole

Innovation – Our local authority was the first in Scotland to use crowdfunding and it encourages more creative ideas from communities and businesses

Internationalisation – Funding is sourced globally into Angus and statistics show that a significant amount is coming from overseas. Our portal also supports businesses to trade internationally through developing global supporters and increasing their presence overseas.

Inclusive Growth – through providing an outlet for projects they have a greater chance of achieving their plans and growing

Our Business Support

Angus is a rural authority area which consists mainly of micro (89.4%) and small (9.2%) businesses. In these times of diminishing resources, one of the challenges we face is to provide support and opportunities for growth to the business community, whilst also encouraging further enterprise from new and emerging talent

Developing Crowdfund Angus has improved relationships between the Council, local agencies, business and individuals and has also introduced an important new direct contact between established businesses and economic development. This is vitally important to ensure our services are supporting the needs of the business community.

Business Support 2017 -Voom Tour 2017

Voom is the next step in our Crowdfund Angus Business support. Voom is a national pitching competition for businesses to enter and have the chance to pitch a business idea to Richard Branson and win a share of £1 million in prizes.

Crowdfunder working in partnership with Virgin media will bring the Voom tour to Scotland. The Funding Policy and Project team manager, Shelley Hague has negotiated the Voom tour bus stops in Angus on one day of the tour. Over the next few months the funding team will be working with businesses to create their own business crowdfunding campaign to enter an Angus wide business competition with the view to also enter Voom national competition.

Awards

Since the launch in 2015 Crowdfund Angus has been shortlisted for the following awards.

MJ Awards – Delivering Better Outcomes, Guardian Awards – Finance category runners up, IESE Awards – runners up Public Service Awards

We won the 2016 Gold COSLA award for ‘Strong and sustainable Communities’

Response to questions

Question 1

Peer to Peer Finance in increasingly playing an important role in helping individuals and businesses access capital contributing to inclusive growth. What needs to be in place to protect participants on both sides and facilitate trust?

Crowdfunder is our partner and acts as an “honest broker” for our portal. Crowdfunder provides all the quality assurance, financial regulations which protects the participant and limits the risk to Angus Council as a Local Authority.



Question 2

How can we ensure that participants are informed about traditional and collaborative finance models?

From the launch of Crowdfund Angus in 2015 we have been aware that this was a very new and innovative approach for our local businesses and communities. We have kept participants informed through attending conferences and funding events, holding training events and webinars. We use both traditional methods and social media to continually promote and inform Crowdfund Angus

Question 3

How could the innovation and learning within the collaborative finance sector, be applied to other sectors within the collaborative economy?

Throughout our Crowdfunding learning journey we have been lucky to have had the support of a variety of Crowdfunder training; this has taken the form of workshops, webinars and teleconferences. We have also arranged training in Forfar at our headquarters where the team have taken part in training applicants. We have worked with many partners a shared knowledge and best practice with local authorities, colleges, universities.

Best practice examples: Business Angus, Angus LEADER, Aberdeen Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Perth & Kinross Council, Fife Council, Argyle & Bute Council, Dundee & Angus College, University of Dundee, Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce, Business Gateway, Sheffield City Council, Cornwall Council, Glasgow City Council, Bristol City Council and many more.