



Case Study

Vodafone UK Foundation

The Vodafone UK Foundation (previously The Vodafone Group Charitable Trust) is a legally independent charity, registered in 1992, which makes donations within the United Kingdom. It is funded by a donation made annually by the Vodafone Group Plc via The Vodafone Group Foundation and an annual donation from the local operating company.



The Foundation provides funds for a range of charities, amongst which are The Samaritans, Shelter and YouthNet UK. These three charities each have received funding from the Foundation to deliver a specified programme over a three year time period.

They are also working in an innovative collaboration with each other to take advantage of the synergies between their organisations. The Foundation has also engaged the support of employees within Vodafone UK to share their skills and expertise and provide practical support where possible to the three charities.

What challenges did Vodafone UK Foundation face?

Sarah Shillito (Senior Manager, The Vodafone UK Foundation) states: “The challenges were twofold, firstly, whilst we get a lot of support for our work from Vodafone staff, the Foundation is stretched for resources and so I do not have the time I would like to prepare, facilitate and shape the partnership.

Secondly, my expertise is in programme identification measurement and evaluation and not project management. I am a creative thinker. I needed to employ external help in order to shape this partnership and a) make it happen, and b) keep the momentum going to ensure that it moves forward on an ongoing basis. I needed someone to put my visions into a structure.”

How Red Ant assisted Vodafone UK Foundation

Red Ant Consulting was commissioned to help structure the programme and facilitate cross-organisational working. This involved establishing the partnership governance, running cross-organisational workshops to maximise partnership opportunities, and driving ongoing progress reviews.

Red Ant provide a flexible and tailored service that makes it more straightforward for the client to understand and remain involved in the activity.



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As Sarah Shillito found out: "I do not want to see solely process, I prefer to see action plans, so the draft proposals outlining the way forward came to me for approval and input, then they (Red Ant) make all the arrangements necessary to move the partnership forward. This includes organizing meetings with associated admin, consult on agenda items, facilitate the sessions, produce feedback and take comments."

The benefits of the Red Ant approach

Sarah Shillito was pleased with the approach that Red Ant took, saying: "They absolutely understand what we want, a bespoke, personalised service, not just a regurgitation of a project management tool as can happen with consultants!" Sarah listed other benefits such as the fact that Red Ant act as a neutral party so they are not on one side when in partner meetings. "They are not afraid to challenge thinking and process."

In addition, both the Samaritans and Shelter welcomed the highly professional approach of Red Ant and saw the facilitation and ability to get thoughts into actions as the main benefits.

Sarah Shillito of Vodafone concludes: "Red Ant provides an excellent service. The work they do for me is entirely with charities and I think their personalities are particularly well suited to this sector - they have the corporate know how and professionalism, with sufficient sensitivity to work well with the charity sector."

More information about the partnership can be found at www.vodafoneukfoundation.org and at the charities' own websites:

Samaritans: www.samaritans.org.uk

Shelter: www.shelter.org.uk

YouthNet UK: www.youthnet.org.uk and www.thesite.org.uk