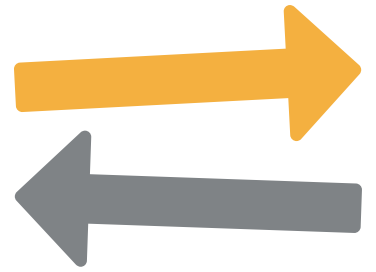


Leaders in Partnership



Leaders in Partnership Autumn 2021 Report

Coaching Islington's community leaders



BIG ALLIANCE

Businesses creating social
change for Islington

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Leaders in Partnership

Leaders in Partnership is a community coaching programme designed to strengthen the leadership of Islington's third sector. The programme creates 1:1 coaching-style relationships between senior corporate employees and their third sector peers. By doing so, Leaders in Partnership enables the development of community leaders and their organisations and allows participants to explore professional challenges and identify solutions in a safe, confidential space. Volunteers have the opportunity to develop their coaching skills, as well as learn about Islington's social issues and the third sector more generally.

Following a careful matching process, volunteer coaches are paired with emerging and established community leaders from Islington, including CEOs, directors, senior management and programme leads. After a training and launch event, partners meet for an hour a month for 10 months. During this time, volunteers act as a sounding board and critical friend, helping their partners tackle professional challenges. Common issues community partners are keen to explore include managing change and transformation, staff performance and motivating the team, developing a leadership style. Other, more operational and strategic challenges, involve developing a marketing and communications style, business planning and project management.

Autumn 2021 Programme – Evaluation

Following the programme's previous success at BIG Alliance's sister charity ELBA, the Autumn 2021 was the first cohort run by the BIG Alliance in Islington. Whilst the programme was launched virtually and most of the 1:1 meetings

took place online, matches were encouraged to also meet in person. The programme's Midpoint and Celebration events were also held in person.

Volunteers

The volunteers came from three BIG Alliance partner companies:



Within their companies, volunteers held a range of roles and responsibilities in a variety of areas including HR, IT, legal, project management, banking, finance, and CSR.

Community Partners

The participating leaders came from ten Islington-based community organisations. The organisations cover a wide range of issues and offer a variety of services to the local community including:

- Digital exclusion
- LGBTQ+
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Young people
- Arts and Theatre
- Community centres
- Marginalised people

Community Partners

10 Community organisations



Mental health and wellbeing



Marginalised people



Digital exclusion



Young people

LGBTQ+

LGBTQ+



Arts and theatre



Community Centres

Community partner impact

At the end of the programme, community leaders were invited to reflect on their experience. Seven out of 10 participants provided feedback.

100%

- **Reported feeling more confident in one or more of the following areas:**
 - Decision making
 - Communication
 - Managing change & transformation
 - Resilience & Wellbeing
 - People management
 - Problem solving
 - Ability to identify solutions to challenges
- **Would recommend the programme to a colleague**

85%

- **Developed their leadership style**
- **Gained a different perspective**

71%

- **Felt more confident in strategic planning and thinking**
- **Felt more confident in influencing**
- **Were able to perform their role more effectively**
- **Increased their capacity**

Community partner feedback

Community leaders shared the benefits of the programme:

"Having a coach has had a calming influence on me and made me value my work more. As a result of the programme, I have connected with corporate employees who work in CSR departments and I've stepped into the corporate world which I had not done before."

"Thanks to my coach, I feel more positive about my role and more comfortable in my leadership position."

"Being on the programme has shown me the value of good planning and prioritising. We have now identified the key priorities at my organisation and developed a yearly plan which will help us stay on track more."

"As a result of the programme, I am more thoughtful about my leadership style and our Strategic Plan is better embedded within the organisation."

On the suitability of their match, the leaders said:

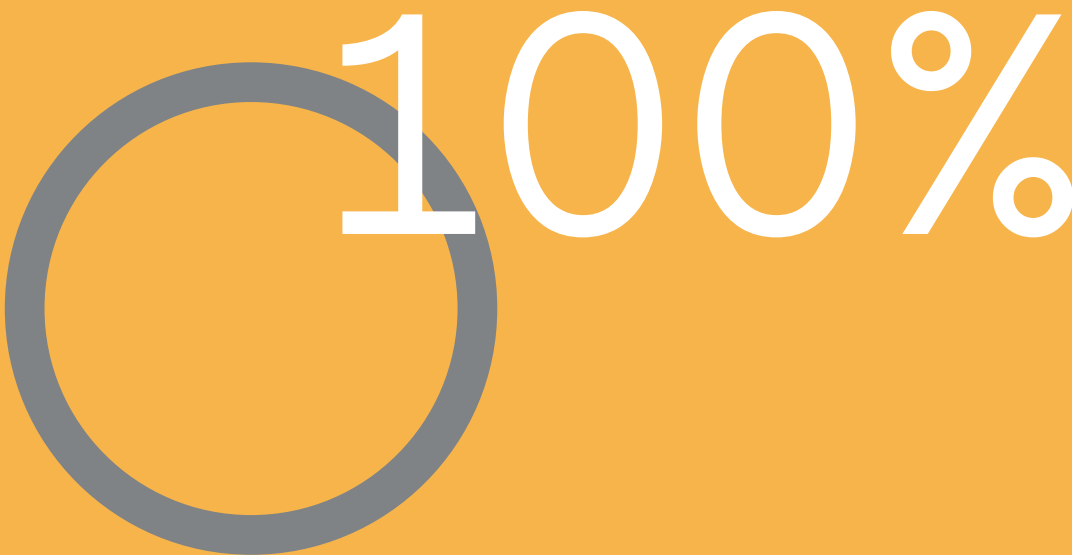
"I had a great coach who was a very good listener, caring and supportive."

"It was a perfect match. My coach was friendly and insightful which made our sessions really enjoyable for me."

"My coach was excellent in strategic thinking and had a wealth of experience in leading his company. Our organisation will be able to successfully grow as a result of his willingness to share his skills and knowledge."

Volunteer impact

At the end of the programme, volunteers were invited to reflect on their experience. Six out of 10 participants provided feedback:



- **Felt more confident in:**
 - Building trust
 - Active listening
 - Asking powerful questions
 - Giving honest feedback
 - Motivating & inspiring others
- **Improved their:**
 - Leadership skills
 - Communication skills
 - Strategic planning skills
 - Problem solving skills
 - Knowledge of third sector
- **Would recommend the programme to a colleague**

Volunteer feedback

On their experience on the programme, volunteers said:

“My match was so different to me, I found it a deeply rewarding and highly educational experience. As a result of the programme, I now think differently about how to solve problems, and I try to focus on putting myself in other people's shoes, rather than just thinking from my perspective.”

“Leaders in Partnership was a really eye-opening experience which gave me an overview of the challenges and issues (particularly funding issues) faced by charities. The programme gave me an opportunity to share my organisational and analytical skills, as well as problem solving skills, to help a community organisation overcome their funding and facility issues. Because of the programme, I have become more empathetic, a better listener, and more self-aware of my communication skills.”

“I found being a coach on LiP to be a humbling and valuable experience. The community partner I was matched with was a huge inspiration to me. I really got to develop my empathy on this programme - understanding the perspective of somebody in an entirely different situation. I loved the programme and would definitely recommend it to others!”

Useful
Inspiring
EYE-OPENING
Engaging
Helpful
EFFECTIVE
Enlightening
REWARDING
FUN
Beneficial
HUMBLING
Thought provoking
POSITIVE
Impactful

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