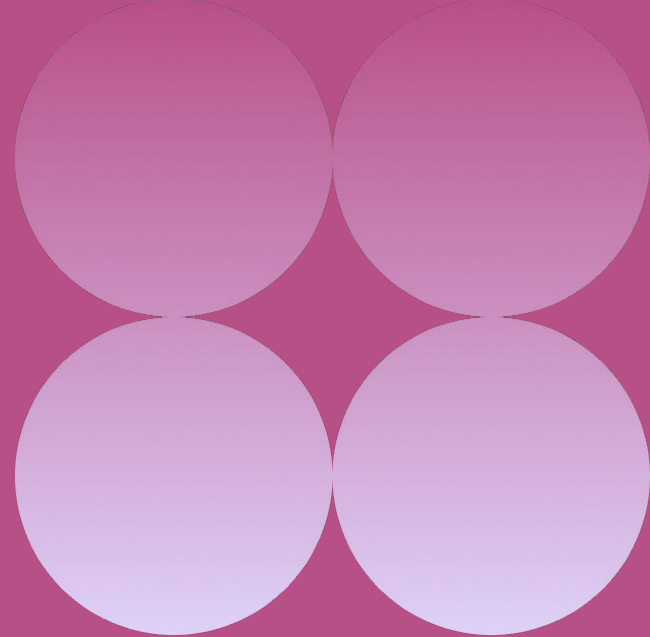


Kitchen Table programme

An evaluation

28th July 2025

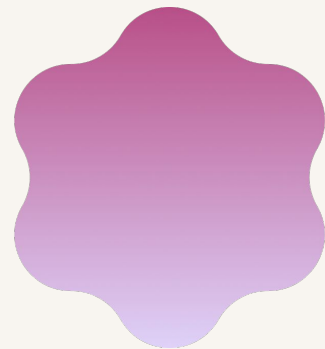


Overview

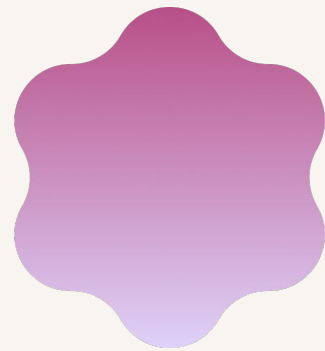
This report reviews participant feedback from the Kitchen Table programme and maps insights against the four intended outcomes:

- Supported leaders
- Hyperlocal support to specialist connections
- Fit for tomorrow
- Sustainable development

Each section includes evidence from participants and an assessment of whether the outcome was fully, partially, or not achieved. Additional insights that fall outside these categories are summarised at the end.



What we did:



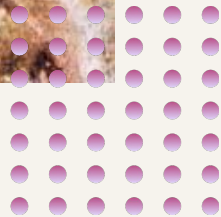
Over the course of the last three months of this six month programme we:

- Undertook five qualitative interviews with identified projects
- Drafted five case studies from these interviews
- Facilitated a 'look back to move forward' session with approximately thirteen of the participants including Funding People colleagues
- Thematically analysed the qualitative data according to the intended outcomes

Key findings

1. Supported leaders

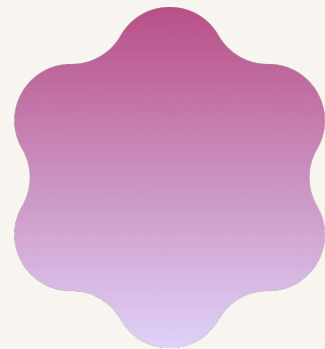
Empowered and resilient leaders able to adapt, reduce waste and confidently find a path to sustainability



This outcome was partially achieved:

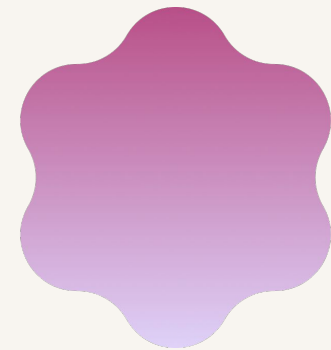
- Participants said the programme was “inspiring,” “ambitious,” and “transformational.”
- Many built confidence through doing, learning, and creating.
- Peer networks described as “100% amazing” – these led to referrals, sourcing resources, and emotional support
- People appreciated the freedom to try new ideas, think big, and push their work forward.
- Personalised support (especially from Zoe) helped participants build resilience and troubleshoot problems.

‘I think I just felt a bit more supported in stuff that wasn’t directly for the project like about the company upscaling and stuff like that’



The challenges:

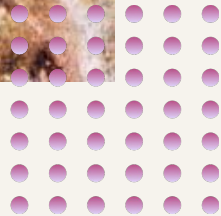
- The speed of delivery was difficult for some of the participants which was echoed by Funding People. This left little time for planning or reflection.
- Some struggled with “work-life balance” and described the experience as “getting comfortable with everything, everywhere, all at once.”
- Limited time and capacity for others made it harder to recruit, train, and deliver effectively.





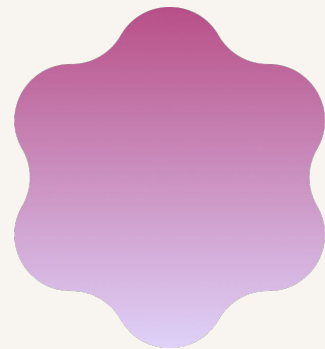
2. Hyperlocal support to specialist connections

Strengthened and aligned networks through co-production with local funders, businesses, council and VCSE organisations.



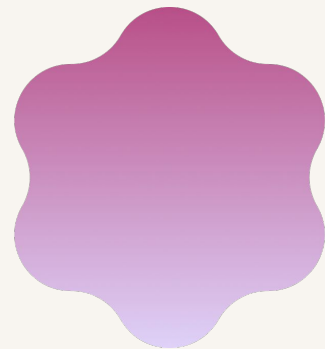
This outcome was achieved

- Participants celebrated connections made during the programme, including unexpected collaborations.
- People felt part of “something bigger” and said the network was “inspiring.”
- The mix of people created a vibrant community and opportunities that wouldn’t have happened otherwise.



The challenges:

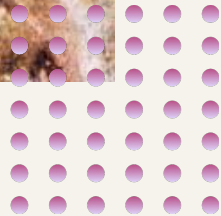
- Participants wanted more in-person interaction over a longer period of time, to build deeper relationships.
- Funding People had difficulty finding appropriate specialist advisors for small grassroots groups, because they simply didn't exist.
- Some – especially those who were very small organisations, felt overwhelmed by the number of emails and the short notice for some of the training sessions





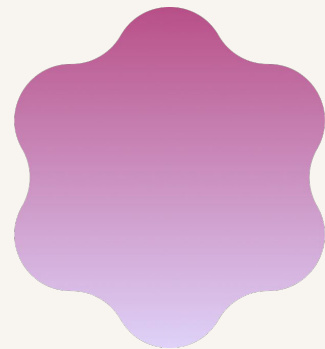
3. Fit for tomorrow

Expanded access and understanding in how to embed digital tools, reducing individual organisational costs with the ability to self-service and improve own outcomes.



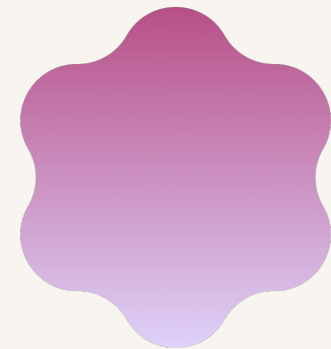
This outcome was achieved

- Participants learned new technical and digital skills, including understanding AI.
- The training workshops were praised for content (especially finance and community assets)
- Blended delivery (online and in-person) enabled flexibility and recordings helped with access
- Training helped people “learn through doing” and sparked new thinking about future possibilities.



The challenges:

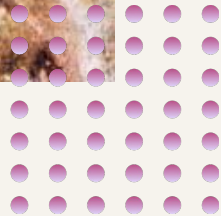
- The fast pace made it hard for some to process everything.
- It was difficult to prioritise or plan sessions, as some had to be announced with short notice.
- It was difficult to discern which training sessions were important to attend and at what level they were pitched.





4. Sustainable delivery

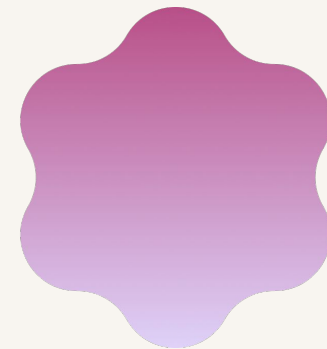
Reduced constraints and reliance to enable innovation, adaptability, and future funding opportunities.



This outcome was achieved

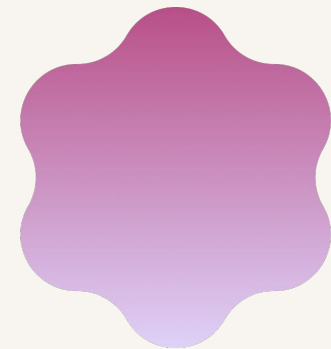
- Participants felt free to be creative and take risks, which led to follow-on opportunities and new funding.
- The flexible approach reduced red tape and gave people room to innovate.

"I'm at the point now where I'm really clear about what I need more of. And Zoe's like "Brilliant, we can help you with that."



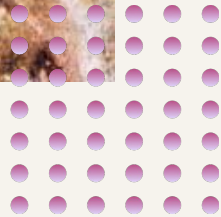
The challenges:

- Time and resource constraints meant not all ideas could be fully explored or sustained.
- Some groups felt the focus on the grant early on left less room for longer-term planning and delivery.
- Limited capacity and burnout risk may reduce long-term sustainability if unaddressed.





5. Additional insights



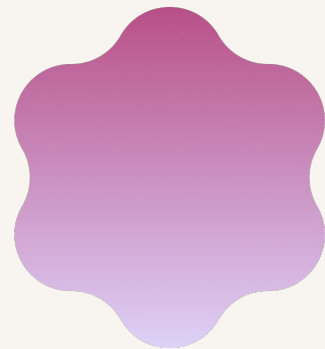
Pace and Capacity

The biggest theme across all outcomes was time pressure. The speed of funding and delivery was both empowering and overwhelming. Many participants felt there wasn't enough time to recruit, train, or reflect. Suggestions included adding more structure upfront and allowing for breathing space.

Accessibility and Inclusion

The funding application was praised for clarity and neuro-inclusivity; the 1:1 support was deeply valued, especially during moments of anxiety and participants felt genuinely seen and supported

'It doesn't feel like anyone is trying to catch you out!'



Final thoughts: ambitious, energising and a lot to hold all at once

The programme was described as “inspiring,” “ambitious,” and “transformational”; it showed what’s possible with the right support, fast funding, and a community of peers. It gave people permission to try new things, grow their confidence, and push their work forward.

At the same time, the experience revealed the need for more time, better pacing, and clearer communication to avoid burnout and information overload. Participants didn’t want less energy or ambition—they just needed more space to keep up with it all. As one person summed it up: “I valued all the opportunities... but I wanted more time to take it all in.”