

Funding Plus survey 2023

The survey was sent to organisations with an active grant or social investment as of January 2023 (672).

We received 187 responses with a representative spread of sectors, and parts of the UK. We have compared responses to the ones received from the 2018 survey (234 responses) and our smaller 2017 survey (81 responses).

Details of the survey method can be found at the end of the paper.

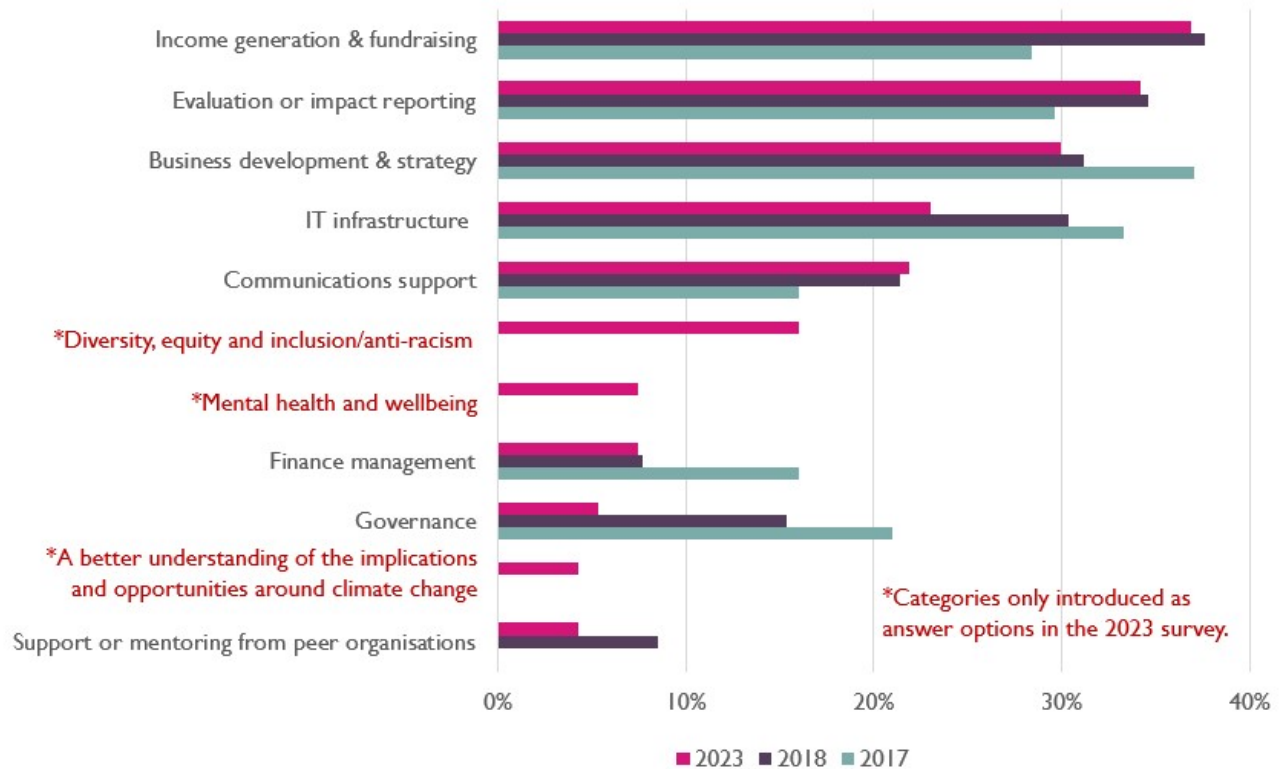
Summary:

- **42%** of respondents have accessed Funding Plus from Esmée compared to **27%** in 2017.

We asked how organisations found a 'Funding Plus' provider to work with:

- **Recommendations from funders (34%) and peers (28%)** ranked highest

We compared 2023 need for Funding Plus with results from the previous surveys. Organisations could select two areas:



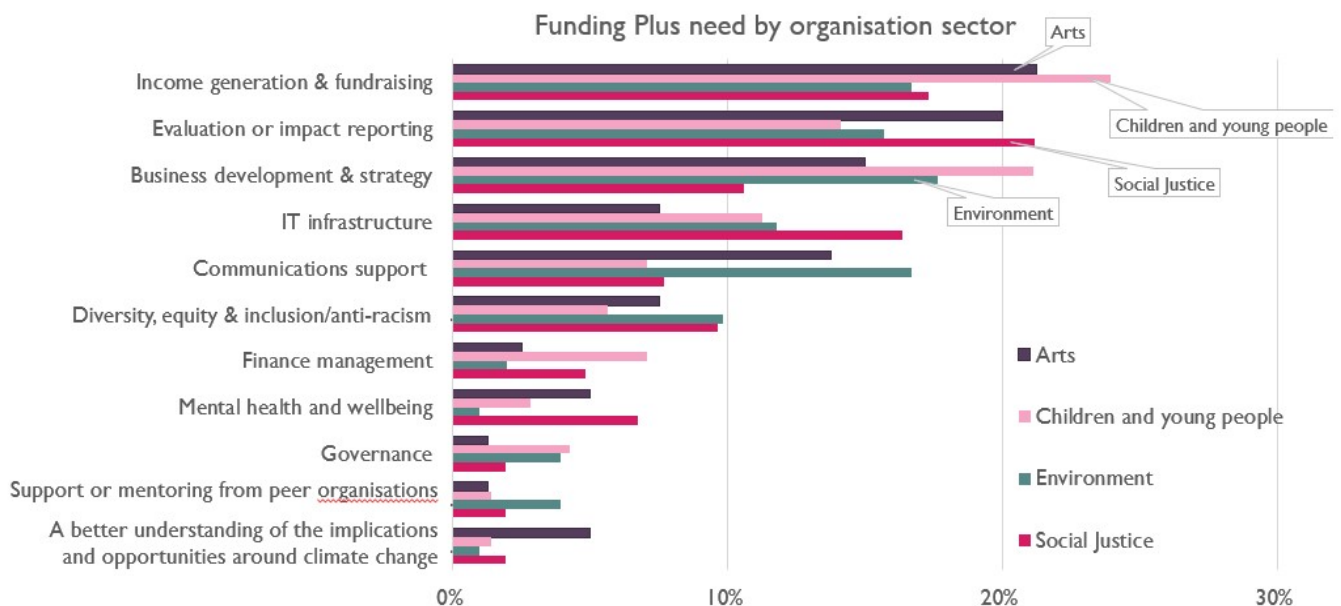
- There is **no change** in the top three areas of need identified in 2018.
- **Income generation & fundraising** ranks highest. **37%** of organisations surveyed say they could benefit from Funding Plus support in this area.
- This is closely followed by need for **evaluation and impact** at **34%**
- **Business development & strategy** is the third highest area of need at **30%**

- **Governance** need has fallen by 2/3 since 2018 to **5%** in 2023. Demand for **support or mentoring from peer organisations** also fell by over half to **4%** (8 of 187 organisations surveyed)
- **16%** of organisations surveyed would benefit from Funding Plus support towards **diversity, equity, and inclusion/anti-racism work** – an answer option introduced in this year’s survey.

We looked at need in different sizes of organisations:

- **Small organisations** (fewer than 5 staff) prioritise support with business development, closely followed by fundraising, and evaluation support.
- **Medium sized organisations** (between 6 and 20 staff) equally rate business development and fundraising as the highest areas of need.
- **Larger organisations** (more than 20 staff) prioritise support with income generation and fundraising.

We looked at need in different sectors:



- **Arts organisations** prioritise income generation & fundraising (21%), evaluation or impact reporting (20%) and business development & strategy (15%).
- **Children and young people organisations** prioritise the same three areas but rank business development & strategy (21%) as the second highest area of need.
- **Environment organisations** prioritise business development & strategy (17%), followed by income generation & fundraising and communications support in equal second place (16.7%)
- **Social justice organisations** prioritise evaluation or impact reporting (21%), income generation & fundraising (17%) and IT infrastructure support (16%)

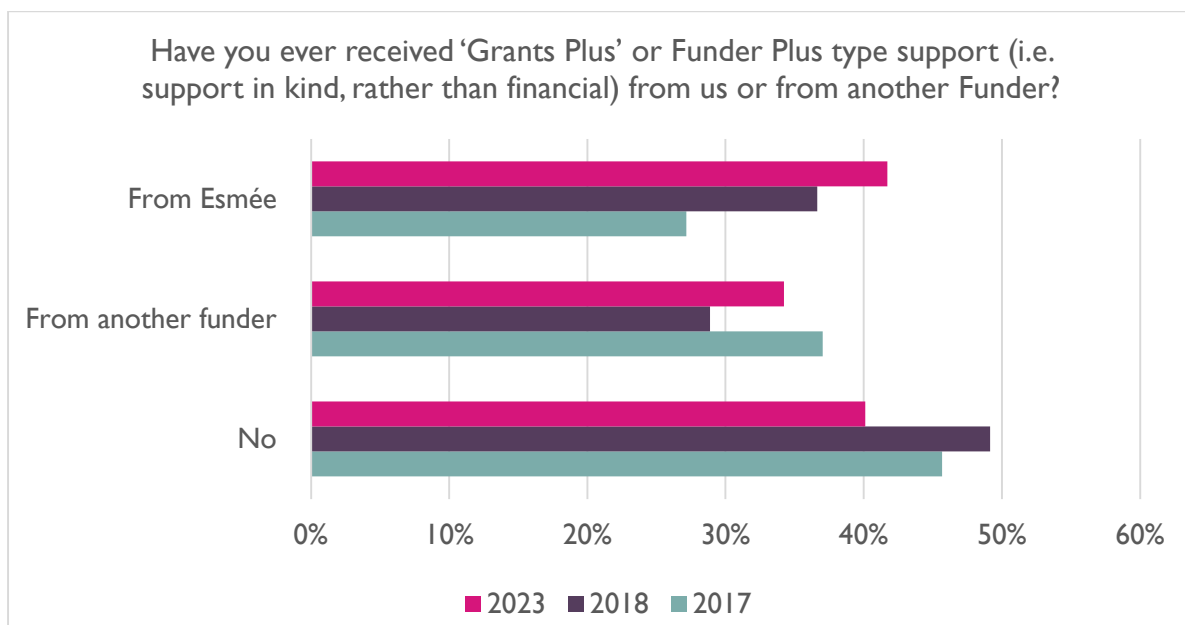
We asked the £8,000 question:

- The highest area of need is the same as reported in 2018 - **investing in internal systems** (37%). 34 of these responses were focused on **staff training and development**.
- The second highest area of need is **business development & strategy** (20%).
- Need for support towards **IT infrastructure has fallen from 23% in 2017 to 9% in 2023**, while **diversity and inclusion** need has **risen from 3% to 7%**.
- Only one respondent commented that £8,000 was too small an amount to make a difference.
- One respondent commented that what was most wanted was help to diagnose and prioritise support needs!

Accessing Funding Plus support

- **42%** of respondents have accessed Funding Plus from Esmée compared to **27%** in 2017.

We cannot assume that 42% of our grantees have been supported – organisations which have received support may be more likely to fill in surveys on Funding Plus support.



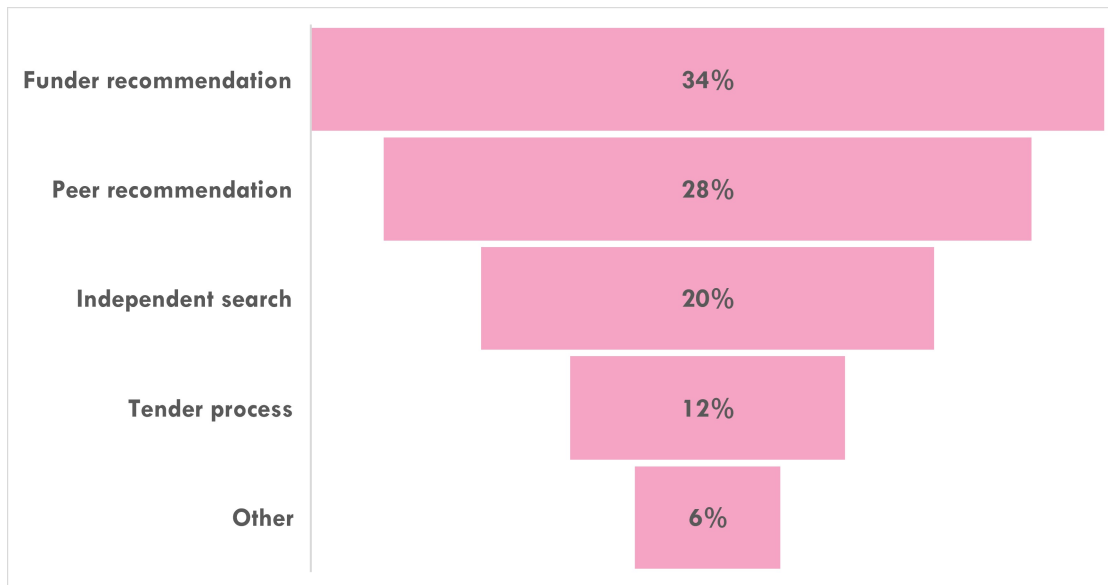
- **Funders offering Funding Plus type support cited by survey respondents:**

Arts Council Wales, Garfield Weston Foundation, John Armitage Charitable Trust, John Ellerman Foundation, The Leathersellers' Foundation, Lloyds Bank Foundation, The National Lottery Community Fund, Oak Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Rank Foundation, The Robertson Trust, The RS Macdonald Charitable Trust, Samworth Foundation, Social Business Trust, Women Thrive Fund.

- **Funders capacity building support offer is similar to 'Funding Plus'**, but also include pro bono advice and seconding staff, peer mentoring, sector memberships and a £30k per organisation per year budget to buy in consultancy support.

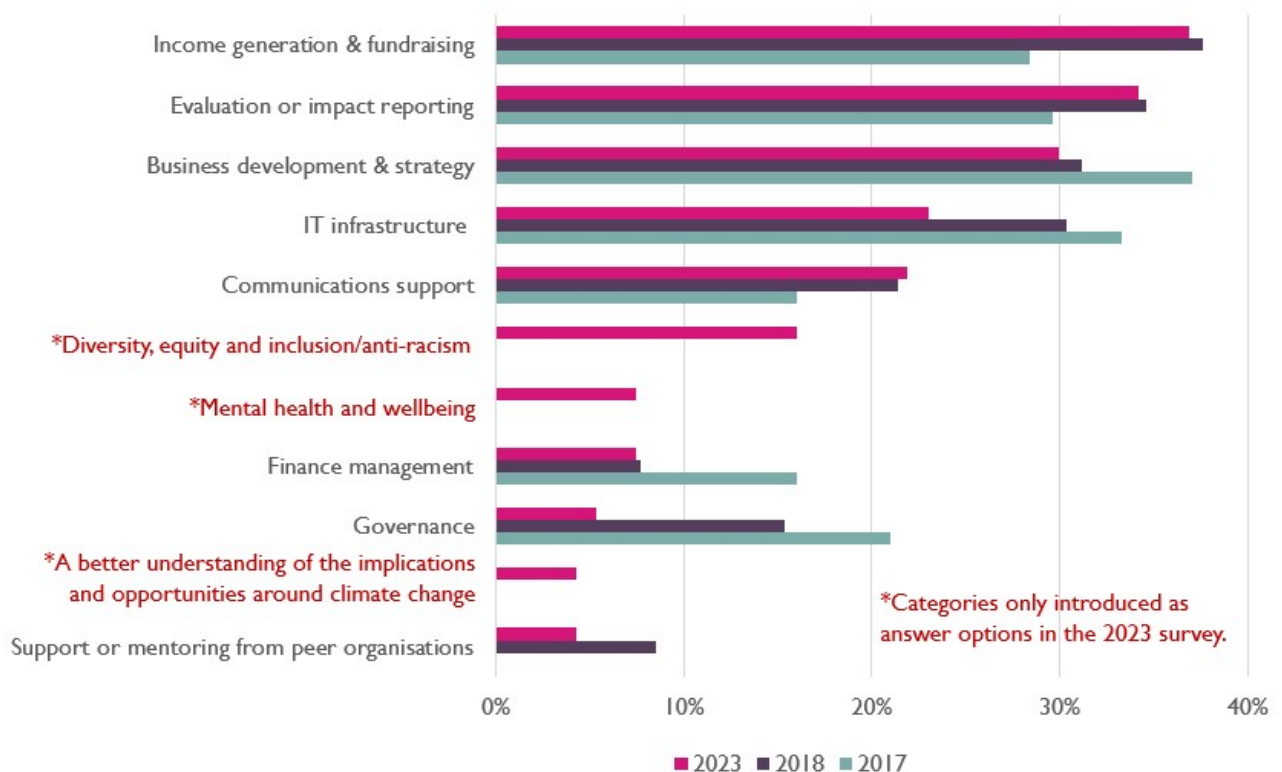
If you've ever received 'Funding Plus' or Funding Plus type support, how did you find a provider to work with?

- Feedback from Funding Plus recipients highlights the time and resource required to find trusted providers to work with. The survey response reflects this view. **Provider recommendations from funders and peers are highly valued.**



If your organisation could take up 'Funding Plus' consultancy or training support, what would be of most benefit right now?

Organisations could select two areas. The comparison between areas chosen in 2017, 2018 and 2023 is below.

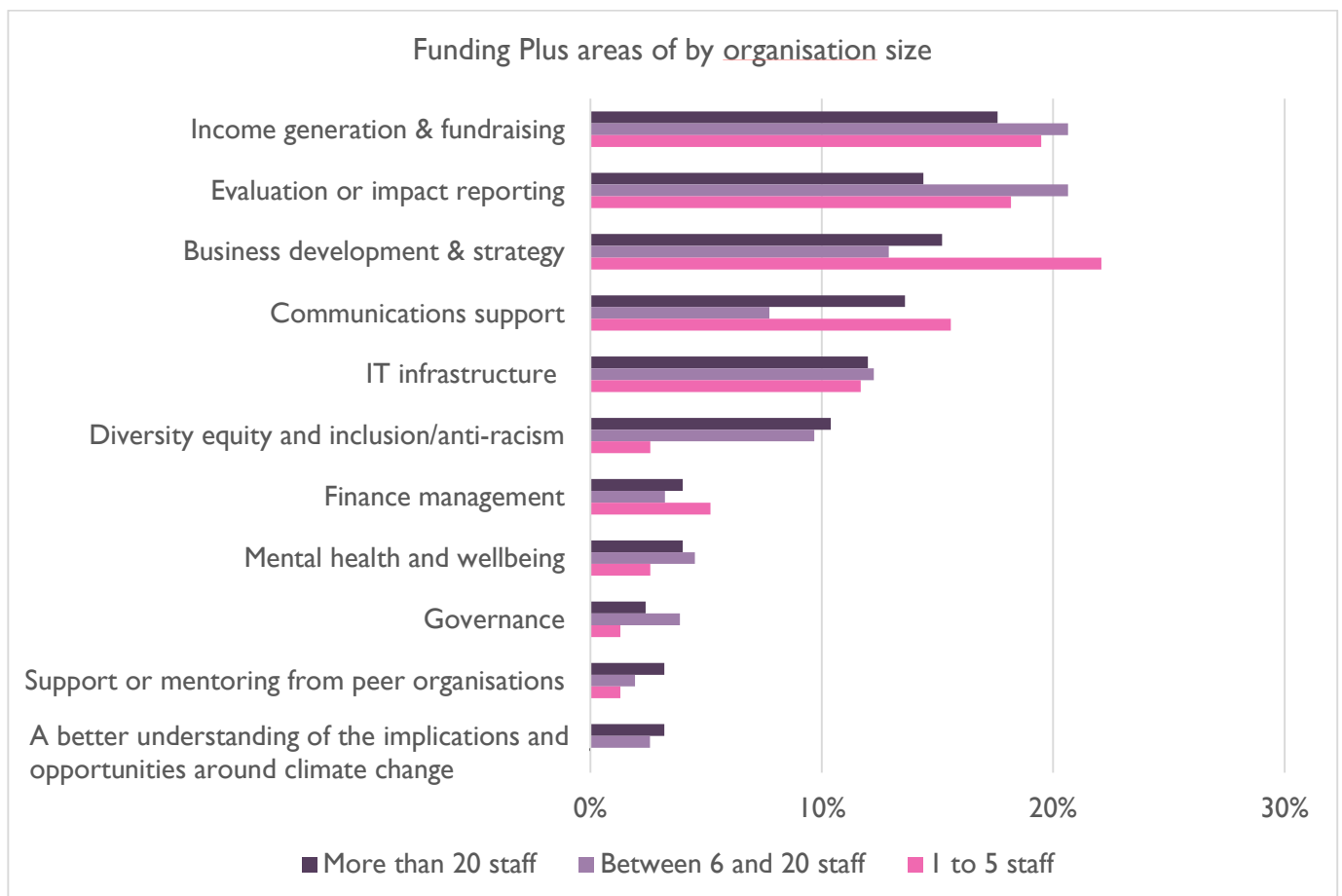


- There is **no change** in the top three areas of need identified in 2018.
- **Income generation & fundraising** ranks highest. **37%** of organisations surveyed say they could benefit from Funding Plus support in this area.
- This is closely followed by need **for evaluation and impact** at **34%**
- **Business development & strategy** is the third highest area of need at **30%**
- **Governance** need has fallen by 2/3 since 2018 to **only 5%** in 2023. Demand for **support or mentoring from peer organisations** also fell by over half to **4%** (8 of 187 organisations surveyed)
- **16%** of organisations surveyed would benefit from Funding Plus support towards **diversity equity and inclusion/anti-racism** work – an answer option introduced in this year’s survey

“EDI [equity, diversity and inclusion] - how we, as a small org with no direct delivery, can take action to progress anti-oppressive practice and diversity within our team”

Do smaller and larger organisations need different things?

We analysed the data by number of staff, to investigate this.



- **Small organisations** (fewer than 5 staff) prioritise support with business development, closely followed by fundraising and evaluation support.

“We have so many ideas and data to support our future plans. We would benefit from help in clarifying our ideas and what is possible; in reality, I am referring to help to write a Business Plan”

“We would address scaling up and how to build capacity to deliver our organisational purpose”

- **Medium sized organisations** (between 6 and 20 staff) rank evaluation and fundraising equally as the areas of highest of need. Need for communications support is almost half that of small and large organisations.

“Individual donor retention and stewardship within the context of a cost of living crisis.”

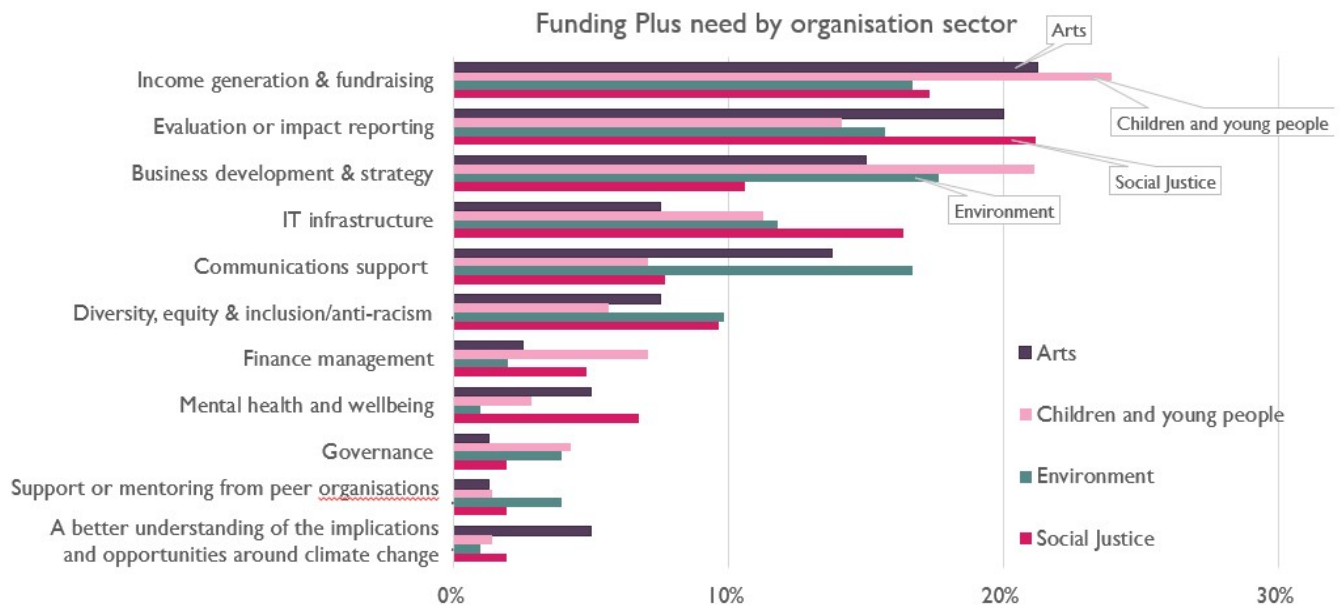
“Commercial development - including legal support for things like contracts and terms”

- **Larger organisations** (more than 20 staff) prioritise support with income generation and fundraising.

“To help us further diversify our income - e.g. through attracting commercial sponsorship”

Do different sectors need different things?

We investigated this by comparing need against the sector organisations self-selected in the survey.

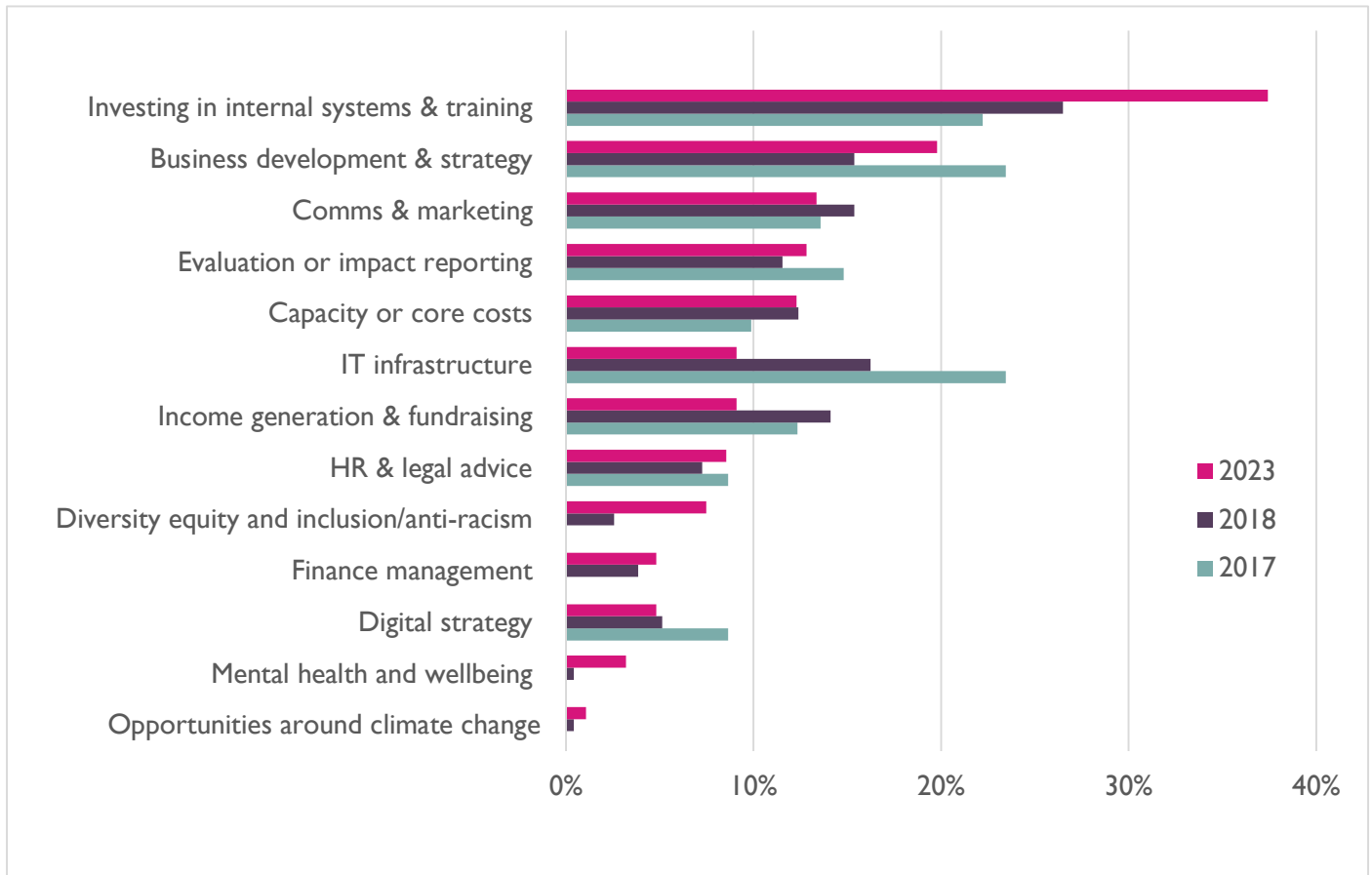


- **Arts organisations** prioritise income generation & fundraising (21%), evaluation or impact reporting (20%) and business development & strategy (15%).
- **Children and young people organisations** prioritise the same three areas but rank business development & strategy (21%) as the second highest area of need. These organisations also have the greatest need for financial management support (7%).
- **Environment organisations** prioritise business development & strategy (17%), followed by income generation & fundraising and communications support in equal second place (16.7%)
- **Social justice organisations** prioritise evaluation or impact reporting (21%), income generation & fundraising (17%) and IT infrastructure support (16%)
- Need for support towards mental health and wellbeing, is highest in social justice organisations (7%)

If you had an extra £6,000 - £8,000 to spend on improving the way your organisation runs, what would you spend it on that could make the most difference?

£8,000 is the current average Funding Plus spend. In previous years, this figure was £6,000.

Some organisations named more than one area, so we've shown the percentage of respondents in each year who named each area, with the total adding up to more than 100%.



- The highest area of need is the same as reported in 2018 - **investing in internal systems (37%)**. 34 of these responses were focused on **staff training and development**. Some of this need is in response to the pandemic and changes in working practice.

“We all work remotely, we need to enhance our systems for remote working and get together as a team more regularly. I would arrange a series of get togethers which would serve to team build and better develop strategy and workplans.”

“Some on internal systems e.g. productivity tools, combined with team building to help with collaboration and performance in a remote team environment that is now the norm”

“Staff development (e.g. agreed number of coaching sessions for each staff members; facilitated team training; two facilitated team awaydays)”

“Consulting staff of what wellbeing at work looks like, thinking about what organisations today need to look and feel like.”

- The second highest area of need is **business development & strategy (20%)**.

- Need for support towards **IT infrastructure has fallen from 23% in 2017 to 9% in 2023**, while **diversity and inclusion** need has **risen from 3% to 7%**.

“We would spend it on some specialist EDI consultancy to better understand how we can help drive diversity in our sector.”

“We would spend it on anti-racist training for our Board of Trustees. This would make the most difference to our organisation and the [...] sector as it would enable us to further deliver our anti-oppression strategy. This work involves risks and therefore we need the full support and understanding of the Board in order to create meaningful change.”

- **Only one respondent commented that £8,000 was too small an amount to make a difference.**

“There are many areas that £8K could contribute towards. However it is not enough money to provide the full amount of innovation we would need. Projects for that amount of money would require staff time and cover so that would be addition to the funding amount.”

- **One respondent commented that most needed was help to diagnose and prioritise support needs!** Responses either focused on pressing needs and challenges or were a shopping list of possible areas of support. This reflects the difficulty in prioritising support needs. Also, the capacity and resources required to action and engage with support.

“This is very difficult to answer quickly and would need a lot more thought. Many of the items listed as being supported by Funding Plus could be useful: the first piece of work would be prioritising them.”

Appendix

Method:

We surveyed organisations in our portfolio with an active grant or social investment as of January 2023 (672).

We received 187 responses with a representative spread of sectors, and parts of the UK. We used numbers of staff as a proxy for size of organisation.

Which sector best describes the area your organisation operates in?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Arts	22%	42
Children and young people	20%	37
Environment	28%	53
Social justice	30%	55

Where is your organisation based?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
East Midlands	4%	7
Eastern	4%	7
London	39%	72
North East	5%	10
North West	5%	10
Northern Ireland	5%	9
Scotland	6%	12
South East	11%	20
South West	7%	13
Wales	4%	7
West Midlands	5%	9
Yorkshire and the Humber	6%	11

How many members of staff does your organisation employ?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Between 1 and 5	21%	40
Between 6 and 10	19%	36
Between 10 and 20	24%	45
Between 20 and 30	13%	24
More than 30	22%	42