

FOR EMBARGOED RELEASE: 29/01/2018 0001 GMT

New resource for charities

1. Is merger the right 'survival strategy' for your organisation?
2. How do you decide what to prioritise when everything is important?
3. What works for setting up cross-sector working?
4. What is core funding, and how do you know if you are ready to apply for it?

These questions are all explored in a [microsite](#) published today by the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR). The free resource, designed with time-poor CEOs and trustees in mind, makes useful and usable insights quick to find and digest.

By sharing findings that we have developed over 17 years of close collaboration with the voluntary, public and funding sectors, we are aiming to help leaders make informed, confident decisions about the future.

Ben Cairns, Director of IVAR, said:

'We want to support the small, voluntary and community organisations that we've been working with since 2000. As our reports are often written for funders, lessons for the voluntary sector can get lost. Here, we've presented them in a way that we hope is useful to senior people with little time.'

Leah Swain, Chief Executive of Community First Yorkshire (formed by the merger of two North Yorkshire charities), said:

'The decision to merge is not one to be taken lightly but the final results can far outweigh the challenges. I hope that the experiences we have shared on the IVAR website give a taster of the highs and lows involved with the process. Having a free online resource like this will, I'm sure, help organisation leaders with the important and complex decisions they need to make.'

Merger

In two short films, we hear how the leaders of the North Yorkshire and York Forum and Rural Action Yorkshire took the decision to merge, with staff sharing their experience of what merger feels like and what has changed six months on.

Lawrence Simanowitz, a partner at Bates Wells Braithwaite, shares his advice for merger.

Strategy and Planning

'This is about the big decisions. The ones that keep you up at night but also get you out of bed each morning' Dr Sam Brier, IVAR Associate and Trustee

IVAR Associate and Trustee Dr Sam Brier lays out a process for reviewing your strategy, and the leaders of IDEAL Community Action and Spotlight UK share their experience of strategic review.

Cross-sector working

'Working with the voluntary and community sector is a great way to deliver local solutions in the areas in which people live in the ways that they want.' Professor Mark Pietroni, Director of Public Health, South Gloucestershire

As cross-sector collaboration increasingly takes centre stage, we've gathered ideas on why it's worth the effort and how to make it a success from the public and voluntary sides of the fence.

Core funding

All our work shows core funding is essential for the wellbeing of small voluntary and community organisations. We don't have any magic words for securing it, but we can share what core funding is, why it's worth pursuing and ideas that may be useful when considering how to make your case.

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Ends

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Notes to Editors

- 1) The Institute for Voluntary Action Research is an independent charity that works closely with people and organisations striving for social change. From the very small that directly support the most vulnerable in their local communities, to those that work nationally – across the voluntary, public and funding sectors. We use research to develop practical responses to the challenges faced and create opportunities for people to learn from our findings.
- 2) IVAR's new microsite will be accessible from www.ivar.org.uk from Monday 29th January 2018, and continue to be accessible at the following link: <http://www.ivar.org.uk/get-support/voluntary-and-community-organisations/>
- 3) Interviews by arrangement with Emily Dyson (07788709549 / details above). Available with Ben Cairns, IVAR Director and others on request.
- 4) Designed assets available on request (low res example below)

