Making it happen

It has now been just over six months since we launched Tony Elischer Foundation and we have been delighted by the support and encouragement which we have received from across the sector. As a new and small organisation, we are fortunate to be able to adapt and respond to ideas and external changes and I thank everyone for all their thoughts, ideas and help which is shaping how we can best develop the next generation of fundraising leaders

Our first cohort of mentees started in October after a very competitive application process. The standard was very high, and we selected a group of eight fundraisers to work with. They work with a wide range of causes and sizes of organisations and this diversity is really helping them learn from one another as well as their mentors. All our first group of successful candidates are UK based and we are now really hoping to spread the word widely and work with talented individuals from across a broad spectrum of international markets in 2018.

The group have all been carefully matched with a mentor and have also been involved in a group workshop giving them insights into their working style which fired their enthusiasm and gave everyone a lot to think about. It was a great way to kick start the programme and I was blown away by the self-awareness, ambition and drive to learn shown by the first group. Our application process is deliberately tough, but the mentees say this helped them start the journey of thinking about why they fundraise and how they can really be as successful as possible to raise funds for their charities. The next group will come on board in January with a closing date of 8.1.2018 so please encourage applications or even apply yourself.

During 2018 we will start up more cohorts who will all work one to one with their mentors. Looking at the objectives which everyone is setting with their mentor, there are some common needs across the individuals and, so we are building in some workshops focusing on areas such as speaking and influencing where we will bring in some expert knowledge and insight from more of our experienced supporters who have kindly offered to help – if you’ve offered help I will be in touch!

The mentoring programme is not always the best way to support some individuals and we will occasionally provide a bespoke support package in response to applications. The first of these is underway with an inspirational fundraiser in Madagascar who is funding a social cooperative. We’ll share her story with you next year.

In 2017 we’ve been very lucky to be able to start to get the message out about what we are doing at many fundraising conferences and we appreciate the support of IFC, AFP Toronto, IoF, CASE Europe and FSI in doing this. Several of our first cohort were inspired by these messages so we’ll be looking for as many ways as possible to let people know we’re here. Give me a shout with any ideas or offers to help with this.

So, all in all the Trustees and I are very proud that Tony Elischer Foundation is up and running and making a difference by sharing expertise and supporting the development of talented fundraisers. Thank you to everyone for the part you are playing in helping us achieve this and we’ll keep talking to our family of supporters 2018 and welcome your involvement and help.