



RUNFOREVER

And we will all be RUNNERS!

Annual Report *April 2025 - March 2026*

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Summary of activities and data

Runforever has been working on two combined and interrelated actions:

- 1- Offering educational projects as “beautiful actions” based on [marathon running and the Feldenkrais method](#) for humanising health care within the prison environment and the community. These practices foster the formation of a community of support which works as a bridge between inside and outside HMP Grampian.
- 2- Nurturing the ground for systemic change recognizing the need for a cultural shift around incarceration and rehabilitation by rethinking education and health.

The activities between April 2025 and March 2026 have included:

- **Running** – following the previous 2 years of work (since March 2023), Runforever continued offering running sessions at HMPG on Thursdays (one afternoon session between Thursday 17th April to Thursday 27th November 2025) for a total of 30 running sessions. The overall total of **running sessions in the three years is 154 involving 145 offenders, 10 prison staff and 7 partner organisations** (IFF - International Futures Forum, Shmu, Familiesoutside, Fife College, RGU - Robert Gordon University, ACE Voices, Cfine).
- **Feldenkrais** – starting in May 2024 we organised the first Feldenkrais course in a prison at HMP Grampian, <https://runforever.org.uk/feldenkrais-at-hmpg/>. These sessions elicited creativity in different forms and allowed the formation of the **Writers in Residence** group promoting and encouraging expressive writing (see further). Since April 2025 Runforever delivered weekly Feldenkrais sessions on 30 Thursdays, two sessions (morning and afternoon); a total of **60 sessions** between 17th April and 8th December 2025 involving a total of **28 prisoners** (mainstream and recovery), and 5 prison staff who are part of the HMPG Recovery, Health & Well-Being Strategy Group. The overall total of Feldenkrais sessions since May 2024 is **120** involving a total of **71 prisoners**.
- **Runningstories** – We recorded 3 more Runningstories episodes which makes 16 Runningstories overall - <https://runforever.org.uk/runningstories/> giving voice to runners and Feldenkrais participants (prisoners and ex-prisoners) about their health and wellbeing in collaboration with Richard Skinner, Media Unit HMP Grampian. See also a similar experience in St. Quentin prison which has been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize, <https://www.earhustlesq.com/about>
- **Photovoice** - 1 more photovoice session has been delivered for capturing prisoners’ experience of the running club and the Feldenkrais classes through photos and words with a health justice approach. The photovoice shows the importance of other ways of valuing the process beyond data gathering (<https://runforever.org.uk/photovoice/>). Together with the Runningstories radio show, this is a way of co-creating value from the inside and highlighting warm data (Nora Bateson, <https://warmdatalab.net/warm-data>)
- **Runforever presentations/participations to public events** through the year
 - 25 April 2025 – **New Insights into Scottish deathways**. University of Aberdeen, 24th – 25th April 2025. Presentation: *Runforever, humanising responses to grief and loss in a prison environment*. See link [here](#)
 - 13th May 2025 - **NHS Grampian workshop** on Impact of the EASE Course and its link to compassionate community building.
 - 27 August 2025 - **Scottish Drugs Forum Glasgow**. Stephanie Morrison presenting in collaboration with Families Campaign for Change “Prioritising People – From Politics to Practice”

- 6th September 2026 - **Recovery Event Midlothian**. Participation to the Recovery Walk by the Recovery Consortium (Tracy McFall CEO) and Community Justice Scotland (James Docherty) and presentation of HMPG prisoners' poetry.
- 19 September 2025 - **Coalition against punishment**. Online gathering with experts and criminologists working at [SCCJR](#) (Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice), Glasgow University, Edinburgh University, Stirling University and in 3rd sector organisations in the North of Scotland (Flip of the Coin, Together Against Punishment, Next chapter Scotland)
- 22nd September 2025 - **Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission event hosted by The Robertson Trust at Robertson House**. Roundtable event in collaboration with the Chair of the independent Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission, Martyn Evans.
- Monthly since April 2025 - **IFF – International Futures Forum, Health Gatherings**. Growing a field of knowledge and practice in holistic, relational health and care. Runforever has been invited to participate to these gatherings which followed a first online workshop held on the 27th November 2024 - <https://runforever.org.uk/runningstories-11/>, What can the educational experience of marathon running inspire in prison education, health and wellbeing? Guided by this question we traced an interdisciplinary and more-than-academic path at the intersection between prison environment, education and health, highlighting values of social inclusion, difference and cultural diversity within the background of systemic transformation.

Main Runforever events

The Silent Run – 6th November 2025.

Runforever organized the second edition of the Silent Run in November 2025. The Silent Run is “not a race but a ritual for remembering, with no finish line” celebrating people who died in prison or elsewhere, because running is not just running. Running is dwelling poetically! The Silent Run is a memorial run opening a path for grieving inside the prison and showing that end of life care needs to be considered part of healthcare.

It happened in two different days to join the inside with the outside

In the community: Saturday 1st NOV 25 (6-8pm) – Heathryburn School, Northfield – Aberdeen

In Prison: Thursday 6th NOV 25 (9-11am, 2-4pm) – HMP Grampian, Peterhead

The event has been the conclusion of a full year of work in collaboration with HMP Grampian in particular the Recovery and Health/Wellbeing team, partner organisations – [ACE Voices](#), [Familiesoutside](#) and prisoners. It has been successful in both locations showing progress and development compared to last year. Indeed, we offered sessions including Feldenkrais, running/walking, expressive writing and singing. Unexpectedly there has been a huge interest and participation of 16 female prisoners who asked for more of our activities to be proposed to them.



Alec Thompson Miller – Ace Voices playing his violin in the middle of the walls of the prison

There has been a very poetic moment when Alec Thompson Miller – Ace Voices, was playing his violin in the middle of the walls of the prison with runners running around, really beautiful and touching! no doubt that we are working through art...in the coming months we will in fact strengthen collaboration with Citymoves Dance Agency envisaging participation to next year (2026) Healing Arts Scotland. As last year the Silent Run has been included in the program of the festival To Absent Friends Festival 2025 and an article has been published on Jogscotland magazine – Stride (at pag.12). Together with partners, we will keep it as a common goal to coordinate and monitor our activities and as a final performance for next November 2026.

See the Silent Run at this link - <https://runforever.org.uk/the-silent-run/>

“Writers in Residence” - 21 November 2025



*If you have the words, there's
always a chance that you'll
find the way*

Seamus Heaney

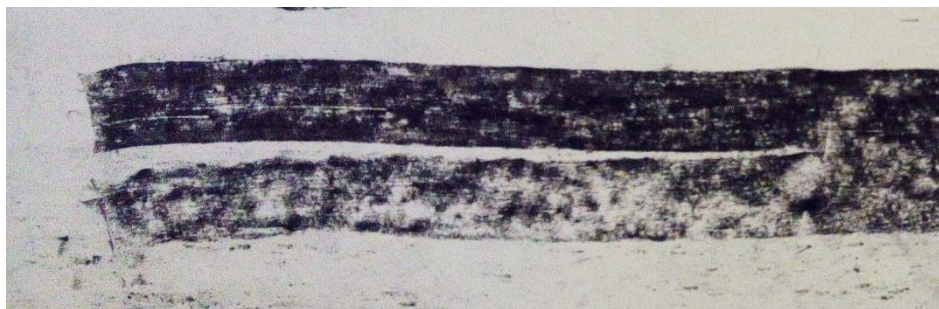
Runforever celebrated expressive writings by poets, writers, rappers and troubadours during prisoners' week, “Crossroads, what's next?” (16°-23° Nov). Stories, words and lived experience have found a way to be expressed inspired by the running/Feldenkrais sessions. The event took place in the Media unit at HMP Grampian. It has been a huge success celebrating all the work we have done in the last few months with around 35 people participating including HMP Grampian Governor, MSP Audrey Nicoll, different members of the prison staff mainly from the new established Recovery and Health/Wellbeing team, representatives of partner organisations – IFF, ACE Voices, Citymoves, Familiesoutside and around 10 prisoners who have been invited to give voice to their lived experience and perform their poems. It has been an honor to witness the fragility, strength and beauty of individuals who explored new paths.

See the Writers in Residence at this link - <https://runforever.org.uk/writers-in-residence/>

Through the thickness – 2/6 March 2026

Exploration of walls and separations through movement leading to performance inspired by the prison work by Runforever. Collaboration between Paolo Maccagno and artist/dancers/Feldenkrais teacher Claire Pencak and Merav Israel with the support of [Citymoves dance Agency](#) - Aberdeen. Residency at [Dance Base Studio](#) – Edinburgh, preparation for participation to Dancelive 2026 - Aberdeen.

This experimental work arises from an encounter at DanceLive Festival 2024, where Paolo attended a performance of Fields (Extract) by In the Fields Project (Merav and Claire). The movement taskscape of Fields (Extract) chimed with Paolo's experimental movement project with prisoners, primarily at HMPG prison in Peterhead, where he works with both running and The Feldenkrais Method. It is the beginning of a conversation through practice to see what new insights might emerge in relation to their common interest on fields of energy/forces, boundaries, separations, walls.



See Through the thickness at this link - [Through the thickness](#)

Runforever on the press

Scottish Parliament motion - Runforever was celebrated in a motion at the Scottish Parliament on the 18th January 2024, <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-11736>

See full list of publications here, <https://runforever.org.uk/on-the-press/>

Results

After a few years of work, we are now more aware of the potential of what we do. As part of Healing Arts Scotland – advocating for improved physical, mental and social health through the arts, we bring beauty to people since the practices we offer touch on, open/mobilise the source of creativity present in everyone. These practices foster processes of self-discovery and healing through movement. They enable people to become more grounded and resilient human beings, to flourish in their vitality and to connect with friends and families by fostering a community of support which works as a bridge between inside and outside the prison and provides the context where good and healthy social relationships can grow.

Runforever became a registered Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) on 20 August 2024 – ([SC053581](#))

The impact and benefits of our work are multifaceted. Given our commitment to participate in changing the conversation about prison and incarceration, our activities have both direct results on the lives of prisoners and on raising public awareness potentially informing new policies and a different understanding of the prison environment.

Benefits for prisoners

Prisoners taking part both to the running club and the Feldenkrais classes - around 215 people in the three years of work - March 2023 to March 2026, with a mixture of different ages, health conditions and life histories - improved their health (physical and mental), resilience, confidence and sense of self (individual and social) and enjoyed being part of a group environment. Belonging to a running club and a Feldenkrais group including people from inside and outside, helped prisoners to feel less isolated, more empowered about their own health and with the potential of transforming their lives. There are many underlying factors for prisoners to reoffend including childhood trauma, educational disadvantage, health inequality, unemployment, addiction, family breakdown, homelessness and poverty. The running club and the Feldenkrais group has been helpful in providing the context where good and healthy social relationships can grow. The small community created by our practices, works as a safe microcosm where prisoners can be together in a dignified and supportive environment, providing the context in which the traumatic experiences that have contributed to offending can be reframed.

The number of people interested in our activities is growing and there is demand for more sessions per week. In particular after the last edition of the Silent Run (November 2026) we received expression of interest especially from the female sector who participated in the event with 16 participants, demanding for Feldenkrais/running sessions.

Barriers between prisoners and non-prisoners are loosening by virtue of an educational approach suspending logics of punishment and refusing to impose hierarchies – “we all run in the same direction” avoiding unnecessary competitiveness and individual confrontation. Prisoners often participated to co-create the path of learning and healing of our programmes and there are ongoing examples of spontaneous mentoring of other prisoners. The non-judgemental environment helped them not to conform to a preconceived set of expected outcomes or achieve specific results but to grow their own potential. Results are in fact specific to each individual and are highlighted by the stories that we constantly collect during our running and Feldenkrais sessions and through the Runningstories podcast and photovoice activities.

Following this approach one of the most important unexpected result of the year has in fact been the Writers in Residence, a group of participants who discovered their creativity and their skills as writers and poets through the activities of Running and Feldenkrais that we offered. These activities engage prisoners in autobiographical paths of self-discovery and healing through movement eliciting creativity and self-transformation.

Benefits on prisoners in more detail

Our activities included Running and Feldenkrais sessions followed by reflective conversations and have been designed to meet the aims of the HMPG Recovery, Health/Well-Being Strategy. Evidence of our work come from the reflective conversations and written forms after each session. Prisoners taking part both to the running club and the Feldenkrais classes improved their mental health by:

- belonging to a safe/non-judgmental group environment/community. Evidence – Regular participation of most participants into our activities. Growing connections and help among participants. Growing enjoyment in everyone sharing thoughts and life experiences. Participants reporting feeling less isolated.
- improving mood/sleep/brain functioning through physical exercise. Evidence – all participants reported improved health conditions which manifested in different ways in their own everyday life: feeling happier, more active, engaging in more activities, needing less medicines and being more able to self-manage their health and wellbeing.
- increasing self-esteem and becoming active participant. Evidence – participants showed progressive confidence in interacting during activities and proposing ideas on how to develop them further. We witnessed the generation of spontaneous smaller groups practicing independently from the weekly sessions and suggesting future events. Some prisoners spoke at meetings/events giving voice to their lived experience. As one example a prisoner who has been in segregation for many years, engaged with Runforever both in Feldenkrais and running and after a few months during a coffee, he shared a poem that he remembered to have written twenty years before, with everyone.
- learning the skills for mentoring other people. Evidence – runners with more experience started giving advice and training other runners. They also acted to promote the running club. Participants to the Feldenkrais classes developed listening skills which triggered them the desire to take part in the mentoring course delivered by the prison and become mentor for other prisoners.
- discovering their creativity. Evidence – after our sessions many participants tried artistic practices like writing poems or haikus, taking photos, participating in radio show, singing together (with Ace Voices). We framed all these activities within the Writers in Residence group.

Overall participants feel healthier and active and being part of a small inclusive community

Team with HMPG

After three years of work (February 2023-March 2026), Runforever has developed a close collaboration with HMP Grampian and is integrated with the new corporate plan of the prison which recognises a wider understanding of health which includes its social determinants (social inequalities/inequities and adverse childhood experiences) as suggested by the HMP Recovery, Health & Well-Being Strategy Group. Together with the a few members of staff part of the HMP Recovery, Health & Well-Being team, we are shaping a new path for recovery and rehabilitation merging the individual with the collective. This approach is in fact coherent with Runforever's philosophy offering educational and mentoring opportunities for prisoners to develop self-awareness and at the same time sense of community through marathon running and Feldenkrais®.

Regular meetings around every 3 months among Runforever and HMPG helped coordinating the common effort towards an experimental educational programme which recognizes that:

- Mental health is not just an individual pathology. It is important to avoid isolation and move beyond individual treatment.

- The medical treatments need being placed side by side with practices of care where people can directly engage in their process of healing and being empowered.
- Recovery is not just offering activities but relationships and care.
- Mental health needs also being addressed relationally by creating a group environment fundamental for feeling safe and therefore establishing the ground for better health. The practices we offer – running and Feldenkrais, allow to create a less confrontational environment enabling safety and friendship.
- Working through art and eliciting creativity is also a fundamental part of healing because it mobilises energies eliciting joy and wanting to live.

We also worked together with HMPG to make a better programme of activities and reduce the chances of their overlapping with other courses. This is a longer-term commitment to make our activities as important as other more institutional within the prison.

Stronger and new connections with partners

Runforever has established stronger connections with past and new partner organisations (see list below). In particular this year we strengthened collaboration with ACE Voices working together for the Silent Run. We also started new collaboration with the Scottish Recovery Consortium that offered us participation to the Recovery Walk in Edinburgh (September 2026) and the opportunity for presenting some of the poems written by the Writers in Residence.

Our activities have been very helpful in building relationships with all those involved and have been warmly welcomed by offenders, prison staff and partner organisations; all are keen for the work to continue in the next months or years.

Public awareness

During the year Runforever expanded its activities for raising public awareness about the prison environment and new approaches to health and education. It participated in public events where it has been invited to present its work in different contexts. See above for list of events and presentations. Among others, it is worth mentioning that the Robertson Trust invited us to express our vision and experience from our work at HMPG and participate in the Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission event, a roundtable in collaboration with the Chair of the independent Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission, Martyn Evans, on the 22nd September 2025.

We also continued making podcasts to give voice to prisoners and participants directly involved in its activities in order to orient future work. All this activity is not a marginal but rather a fundamental one for nurturing the ground for systemic change. In fact Runforever's work aims at going beyond being a compassionate project towards a symbolic political action raising awareness about walls and separations which characterize prison environment and more generally the world we live in.

First Feldenkrais course delivered in a prison.

Starting in May 2024 we organised the first Feldenkrais course in a prison at HMP Grampian which continued through all 2025. The weekly Feldenkrais® classes have been followed by group sharing and conversation and engaged prisoners in autobiographical paths of self-discovery and healing through movement. They have been the ground for eliciting creativity and self-transformation. After each session prisoners were invited to voice emerging sensations, feelings and emotions through different techniques including automatic writing and improvisational drawing, allowing the unconscious mind to flow freely onto the page.

The course was particularly addressed to vulnerable prisoners avoiding the fit-gym culture, who are at greater risk of frailty and deconditioning, and subsequently experience complex health-related issues. It has been delivered in collaboration with the HMPG Recovery, Health & Well-Being Strategy Group proposing a person-centred approach which enabled prisoners to self-manage their health and wellbeing within prison and prepare for community re-integration.

- “Writer in residence - the prison poet” at HMPG. Monthly Expressive writing workshop. After collecting stories, words and lived experience from the weekly running/Feldenkrais sessions, participants will engage in Expressive writing (Pennebaker’s method), and experiment to write/compose poems, haikus, stories, autobiography. Some of these outcomes might then become the base for creating connections with family members or friends to whom they might like to dedicate their work. In the months approaching the Silent Run, participants will explore ways for re-establishing relationships with their families for example by writing letters or drawing a T-shirt to dedicate their runs.
Led by experienced occupational therapist and former lecturer RGU.

The Writers in Residence - wild flowers grow unexpectedly

By offering running/Feldenkrais sessions we elicit creativity in people and enable them to become more resilient, to flourish in their vitality and to connect with friends and families. This is what happened unexpectedly this year where more students/participants in our classes discovered that writing down thoughts and sensations after the sessions with us helped them a lot. We noticed that and [Stephanie Morrison](#) had the idea to name this unexpected wild flower “Writers in residence” proposing to work through the expressive writing method [by James Pennebaker](#) where writing is personal, free-flowing, and informal, typically without concern for style. It is not about becoming poets (although this can happen) but of [healing through writing](#). Prisoners discovered unexpected paths of self-awareness and ways to connect and re-establish relationships with their families and friends.

The Silent Run as a ritual and recurrent event and death awareness in prison

The second edition of the Silent Run - 6th November 2025, confirmed and raised a lot of interest in the prison and in the community. We consider this as an important result because it is now becoming one of the recurrent events during the year at HMPG. There are already ideas about next edition for November 2026. This event includes a series of preparative activities happening during the year in collaboration with ACE Voices inside and outside the prison. It offers us the opportunity for opening a wider conversation about death within the prison and works as a starting point for opening/allowing a space for grieving for prisoners (without grieving properly a death can become a trauma). It finally clarified that what Runforever proposes “is not just running” but something of a different kind from the fitness culture. As an example, listen to this Runningstories episode at minute 16'15 <https://runforever.org.uk/runningstories-8/>. Our work has been positively recognized by GLGDGG which supported and funded the Silent Run and invited us to give presentation of this new path towards deathcare at the conference in Glasgow [Demystifying Death: Making Change Happen](#). This path is rich in potential and our activity for 2026 includes another Silent Run in November 2026 to coordinate our work. Our aim is to create the ground for a culture around death which is equal and just, especially in marginal contexts like prison, in recognition of the fact that end of life care, funeral provision and post-death care need to be considered part of healthcare.

Suspension at the end of 2025 and beginning 2026

Overall our activity in the last year went very well. It received praise and appreciation from prisoners, service users, partner organisations and HMP Grampian wishing us to continue our work. Based on these successes The Robertson Trust invited us to express our vision and experience at the roundtable for the Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission event (22nd September 2025) and HMPG has asked us to formalize a new partnership agreement to continue and expand our work.

We expected to receive support and funding from previous and other funders but regardless the very positive impact of our work, most of our applications have been unsuccessful forcing us to suspend our activities at the end of 2025 and beginning 2026.

In appendix, thoughts from Paolo Maccagno about funding applications and here below some good

words of encouragement from Jane Russell - ACVO

“I think a break from this relentless ‘wall of pain’ is a very good idea for Runforever and all of you involved. We have a battle saying in English which goes like this ‘He who walks away, lives to fight another day!’ You have already proven to yourself and others that what you have been doing is life changing, immeasurably valuable and absolutely fits in with ‘being human, leading courageously, reimagining investment, and demands the sharing of power/decision-making but also questions the validity of measuring outcomes from a ‘statutory’ perspective and in fact from many perspectives!”

Runforever worked with - partners

- HMP Grampian
- ACE voices
- Cfine
- Familieoutside
- Good Life Good Death Good Grief (GLGDGG)
- Scottish Partnership Palliative Care (SPPC)
- Citymoves
- International Futures Forum (IFF)
- Scottish Recovery Consortium
- Clancancersupport

Runforever received funding from

- Athletics Trust Scotland – 2023 and 2024
- To absent friends – GLGDGG - 2024
- Community Mental Health Fund (AVA) - 2024
- Community Mental Health Fund (ACVO) – 2025 and 2026
- The Robertson Trust - 2025
- Hugh Fraser Foundation – 2025
- The Allen Lane Foundation - 2023
- Private donations – 2023, 2024 and 2025

Programme of work for 2026

Our work is to inspire people through the practices we propose (running, Feldenkrais and expressive writing), providing knowledge and skills. Their main aims are to give participants the opportunity to grow awareness and confidence in their own innate abilities for taking care of themselves and others.

During 2026, we will be offering the following in collaboration with the Recovery, Health/Well-Being team at HMPG and partner organisations:

- Running/Feldenkrais® sessions at HMPG engaging prisoners through movement enabling deep transformative experiences, self-manage their health and improving their resilience.
- Expressive writing workshops for the “Writers in Residence” at HMPG. Prisoners will experiment to write/compose poems, haikus, stories, autobiography as healing process and an opportunity for creating connections with family members or friends to whom they might like to dedicate their work. In collaboration with Familiesoutside.

- The Silent Run at HMPG and at Heathryburn School, Northfield Aberdeen – 3rd edition beginning of November 2026. Memorial run (or walk) celebrating people who died in prison or elsewhere. The Silent Run is “not a race but a ritual for remembering, with no finish line”. In collaboration with ACE Voices and GLGDGG - Good Life, Good Death, Good Grief (see website, [Silent Run](#))
- Running/Feldenkrais/Singing workshops at Heathryburn School, in collaboration with ACE Voices, designed to bridge the different practices and imagine/create a choral run, a “choir in movement” towards the Silent Run. We will utilise words from the weekly sessions at HMPG to compose a song that will be performed by ACE Voices’ Intergenerational Choir; dedicated to the prisoner population as another way of bridge-building. Prisoners’ families will be invited to join in collaboration with Familiesoutside.
- Runningstories podcast and Photovoice giving voice to prisoners (see website - [Runningstories](#), [Photovoice](#))
- Mentoring opportunities (eg. jog leaders training) for prisoners to learn the skills for mentoring other prisoners within the prison. This can also create new paid and voluntary roles in the community through sport for ex offenders.
- Helping the transition back to social life for ex-offenders by facilitating links to running clubs and Feldenkrais groups outside.
- Organization of events inside and outside the prison giving voice to new forms of rehabilitation through art and performance to expand public awareness including the **Silent Run** (see above), the **Writers in Residence** event - November 2026, celebrating expressive writings by prisoners and **Through the thickness** - October 2026, art/dance performance inspired by the prison work in collaboration with Citymoves Dance Agency, Aberdeen. See Through the thickness at this link - [Through the thickness](#).

Through these activities Runforever seeks to create a safe space and a group environment where everybody is for a moment a “runner” or a “Feldenkrais student” or a “writer in residence”, suspending logics of punishment which often reinforce traumatic experiences. This is especially important for prisoners who often spend more than 20 hours/day in cells, increasing feelings of isolation. Many inmates have encountered multiple adverse childhood events (ACEs) leading to trauma. When outside they are often stigmatised therefore risking poverty and homelessness. Our activities are proposed as practices of care making a significant impact on prisoners’ lives leading to improved health, resilience, confidence and sense of self (individual and social) and creating family/friends connections.

Runforever

<https://runforever.org.uk/>



Appendix - Thoughts on funding applications and beyond by Paolo Maccagno

Personally I don't see positive signs for our work to continue in the prison given how things are developing especially in relation to funding applications. Incidentally, the funding applications are not a marginal phenomenon affecting momentarily third sector organisations but one of the forms of the social and political collapse due to the pressures of the neoliberal system.

Here below a few considerations and reflections

Funding applications are becoming increasingly competitive, demanding and sometimes even "arrogant" forcing organisations to align with their "values" if they want to get fundings.

For the past 3 years Runforever has been able to offer at least a full year of work in the prison ensuring continuity thanks to private grants - during the first year and half, and then to some successful funding applications - during 2024 and 2025. After November 2025 all our fundings have finished and we have suspended our work.

We believe that it is fundamental to offer continuity to our activities in order to create the conditions for developing good relationships. This is fundamental to growing health in individuals. What we see happening through very small grants goes unfortunately against this possibility. This in fact allows just a few months of work which generally takes the form of block of classes. We have always avoided this format because we believe that education, learning and healing cannot happen within the productive logic that underpin the idea of a block of classes.

The amount of money that a small organisation like Runforever can apply for is generally small given our year-income (around £30,000). In fact this has been recently restricted between £1,000 and £3,000 for most funders implying that we need to apply to different fundings. Although our work reaches a broad spectrum of potential beneficiaries (mental health, trauma, ADHD, depression, addiction, veterans, elders etc.), we need at every application to describe our work in terms of the logics of the funders spending a lot of time and energies in doing so. To reach our year budget and provide the continuity we want, we need to be successful for around 12-15 different grants. This would mean to apply to around 50 different funders considering a 20-30% success rate (and probably it is now even lower).

Most of the times funding applications push organisations to rely on the work of volunteers. This is a dangerous and generally overlooked invitation because it exploits people and asks to do what should be paid jobs for free. When we had to suspend our work a few months ago, we felt "guilty" of not being able to offer it as volunteers. This sensation came from some words and comments we received which unintentionally expressed the background of expectations on our work. This is paradoxical and mortifying. As I wrote in some emails to some friend prisoners, "Runforever has been paid work and not volunteering. There is often the misconception that doing compassion work implies being a volunteer. But I'm not rich enough to be a volunteer".

Furthermore funders tend to restrict the money paying for the fees of professionals (although they ask to respect the Real Living Wage). In some recent unsuccessful applications, we received feedbacks commenting on our fees being too high regardless being ironically the same we asked the previous year to the same funder. This is offensive for the work that we do and the professionalism and time we put into our work - both people working for Runforever are of very high qualifications and work experience.

Seeking funding changes the nature of our work and ourselves as people. First, we must devote most of our time to applying, rather than dedicating it to our solidarity work. Second, and most importantly, this has the insidious implication of deeply infecting ourselves due to the competitiveness of that environment. How can we create a new world, beyond the violence of competition, if we are infected by it?

All the above is not new and most people working in third sector organisations might have similar ideas and face similar problems. Whenever it happens to share these thoughts, everyone comes in the end to the question, what else can we do apart from applying for funding to continue our work?

Given that no one has an answer to that question, everyone continues to follow the path of applications. Instead in my opinion, not having the answer doesn't mean we have to follow that path.

My suggestion is that we should stop and remain in the question, what else can we do? This would be a political action of resistance where we don't just try to face or fix the problem of fundings but we allow a space for a deeper awareness for imagining new ways of continuing our work which is not complicit of logics that we don't share.