

Access to Industry

Operational Plan 2020-2023



reducing barriers to further education and employment

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Introduction

As Access to Industry move into our third decade, we set out the basis for our strategic planning for the period 2020-2023. These plans will build on our development and successes over our first 20 years.

When Access to Industry was first constituted in February 2000, our focus was on supporting people access education and employment within the creative industries. Over the intervening years our focus specifically on the creative sector may have diminished, but our commitment and expertise in alleviating barriers that are preventing progression has grown. Our experience in supporting unemployed people now includes a specialism in working with people with a history of previous misuse of substances; offending; with accommodation issues; and with mental health issues, which mean that their barriers towards education and employment are compounded. From our humble beginnings in the Wester Hailes area of Edinburgh, we now provide these services in communities and HMPs across the central belt of Scotland and work with people of all working age.

Our aim is as it was at our inception, to assist people with barriers to progression in Scotland to move into education and employment.

Environment

2020-2023 brings uncertain times within Scotland and the United Kingdom that will impact on our sector and Access to Industry. The next 3-years will see the UK's exit from the European Union; a Scottish Parliament election; Local Government elections; establishment of City Regions; and possibly a Scottish independence referendum. While these events will inevitably mean changes in policy priorities and funding, AI will continue to seek to deliver appropriate services relevant to our aim. Our strategic focus centres on ensuring that we are predicting, poised and ready to find opportunities in change. Our tenure has demonstrated that we are a resilient organisation that has, and can, adapt in order to continue to support people with barriers to progression.

Opportunities

Many of our clients face significant barriers to employment but we are also entering a period where employers in some sectors are anticipating difficulties in recruitment. Our holistic approach to client case-management will work to alleviate barriers and we must make use of high employment rates and encourage the willingness of employers to consider individuals with barriers, including convictions, to consider work placements and employment. We need to develop our learning opportunities to give our clients the skills they need to achieve employment.

Funding is a perennial issue for the voluntary sector and we need to be connected to funders and partners in order to maintain, and grow, services to future clients. We need to be prepared to lead on tender bids and know who to partner with, and with its best, to let others lead. But we also need to be creative about how we grow, we need to explore other avenues that will encourage income into the organisation. And for that we also need to be better at telling others what we do and the impact it has.

We need to ensure that our employees and our organisation are predicting and ready for the changes we need. Our employees need to be motivated and skilled in supporting the diverse needs of clients. Our organisation too needs to be ready for our own change and those that impact on our clients, whether that is technological, environmental or whatever.

But we also need to tell others what we do. We are an organisation that likes to get on with the day-job and not draw too much attention to ourselves but we acknowledge that our strategic focus will be easier achieved if we have mechanisms to show people what we do. Being better at internal and external communication will support our ambition to keep providing services to clients for the next 20 years.....and beyond.

Strategic Focus

We want to:



Operational Plan

We will measure achievement of our strategic focus against our operational plan. This sets out the key performance indicators for each focus and the steps within each. We will use these to indicators report on progress to our Board and stakeholders.

Sustain and evolve our services to our clients and our communities

We will maintain our services by:

- **Consolidating our current services**
 - Achieve targets set by funders to maintain current service delivery and to support future funding bids and applications
 - Work closely with our local partners to ensure relevance of ongoing services and to shape future services
 - Plan for future funding bids to ensure continued support for clients across our current geographies
- **Grow services in our communities**
 - Identify gaps in employability support in our current geographies and to people experiencing barriers to progression and employment
 - Build local networks to support the development of new projects and progression routes of clients
 - Apply for, and achieve, funds to deliver new services
- **Meeting clients' holistic needs**
 - Ensure all our clients, in all our geographic areas, are offered a case-management approach that is person-centred and holistic in its approach to engagement and progression
 - Develop internal expertise and utilise these knowledges across the organisation

- Consult with our clients about what they wish to be included in our service
- **Ensure we are equipped to make learning central to all our services**
- Work with our learning partner, Edinburgh College, to develop our learning offer to our clients and build our community college curriculum
- Make the offer of accredited learning and integral part of our offer to every client, delivered in a one-to-one setting or in group work
- Explore the opportunities to widen our learning offer through a variety of accreditation routes

Build our business

We will grow the business opportunities of Access to Industry by:

- **Developing new partnerships**
- Widen delivery networks that will benefit our clients and grow our profile
- Actively seek partnership opportunities with voluntary organisations that share the same ethos and values as us
- Work with employers to develop work placements and job opportunities
- **Gaining contracts**
- Take the lead in developing funding bids, identifying and working with partners where this strengthen bids
- Seek partnership opportunities in City Region and National tenders and bids
- **Generating new, unrestricted, income**
- Explore opportunities for income generation through 'pop up' businesses, giving experience to, and maximising the talents of, our clients
- Promote the opportunity of Access to Industry being a charitable organisation to fundraise and to donate to

Strengthen our core

We will strengthen our core by

- **listening to our clients and acting upon what they say;**
- Develop ways of effectively consulting with all our clients on the services we offer; their barriers to participation; how we are doing; and what else we could be doing
- Ensure that we communicate effectively with our clients and in a way that is accessible to them
- Provide opportunities to develop clients' potential including work placement; and volunteering opportunities with AI; and through 'pop-up' businesses
- **Ensuring our employees have the skills and tools they need;**
- Consolidating and building our training and development programme to ensure employees develop from point of induction through to long-term retention.
- Providing training that gives the confidence to support our clients and their diverse needs
- Enabling the opportunity to learn from each other and the space to share and develop ideas.
- Providing the physical resources required for employees to carry out their role

- **Building our volunteer opportunities**
 - Develop volunteer opportunities across the range of our projects
 - Build our volunteer support mechanisms to ensure each volunteer can develop in their role
 - Enable our own clients to apply for internal volunteer opportunities

Grow our reputation

We will grow awareness of our organisation by:

- **Building our organisations profile**
 - Raise profile with key policy makers
 - Build and maintain profile with key referral agencies
 - Increase awareness of Access to Industry in general, with potential partners; employers; and volunteers
- **Ensuring we have secure data**
 - Achieve Cyber Essential accreditation
 - Maintain a high standard of data security protocols and procedures
- **Grow our presence**
 - Invest in our promotional information and make this readily available
 - Seek opportunities to convey good practice

Our starting point

Our success will be measured against our key performance indicators, and our 'starting point' – our twentieth year starting point.

In the year to March 2019

- 596 clients were supported by Access to Industry projects
- 341 gained a qualification
- 203 participated in training
- 78 moved into further education
- 59 gained a job

Our geographic coverage in the same year included

- East Lothian
- Edinburgh
- Falkirk
- Midlothian
- North Lanarkshire
- South Lanarkshire

The HMP's we worked within were

- HMP Addiewell
- HMP Corton Vale
- HMP Edinburgh
- HMP YOI Polmont

Our people were:

- 22.4 FTE members of staff (at 31 March 2019)
- 12 volunteers (of which 8 are Board Members)

Our finances, for the financial year 2019-20 we had:

- £831,246 income, of which £3250 was unrestricted
- £833,901 expenditure
- £165,057 unrestricted reserves