

## Employability and Adult Learning Project How-to Guide



This guide offers more detailed information and advice for those who may be interested in adopting or adapting the initiative in their local area.

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<b>Title</b>	Employability and Adult Learning
<b>Organisation</b>	AMINA
<b>Category</b>	Promising Practice
<b>Poverty Impact</b>	Mitigation and Reduction
<b>Introduction to the Project</b>	
AMINA is charity organisation based in Glasgow offering free Employability Support and workshops to unemployed women, individuals, and ethnic minorities for whom English is not their first language. Employability and Adult learning resources are provided free as means to empower socioeconomically disadvantaged, ethnic minorities to find sustainable employment through the provision of employment skill sets and learning opportunities. This is achieved through the provision of free IT resources, volunteering and learning opportunities, and a support network of likeminded individuals.	

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## Initial Idea

<b>Who had the initial idea?</b>
Emma Simpson
<b>How did the idea for the project come about?</b>
Service user and staff feedback identified a gap in services being offered around employability and training for Muslim and BME women living in Scotland.
<b>Did you draw on any published reports / papers / research evidence or practice you had seen elsewhere to inform your plans?</b> <i>If so, please add details to the box below.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Khan, O. et al. (2014). Caring and earning among low-income Caribbean, Pakistani and Somali people. Youth: JRF. <a href="https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/caring-and-earning-among-low-income-caribbean-pakistani-and-somali-people">https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/caring-and-earning-among-low-income-caribbean-pakistani-and-somali-people</a></li><li>• House of Commons Women's Committee (2017) Employment opportunities for Muslims in the UK. <a href="https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmwomeq/89/89.pdf">https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmwomeq/89/89.pdf</a></li><li>• Woodward Abigail (2018). <i>Exploring economic inactivity through lived experiences of British Pakistani Muslim women</i>. Project Report. Bridge Institute for Research and Policy. <a href="http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6250-9070">http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6250-9070</a></li><li>• Close the Gap (2019) Still not Visible. Research on Black and Minority Ethnic Women's Experiences of Employment in Scotland. Close the Gap. <a href="https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/1557499847_Still-Not-Visible.pdf">https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/1557499847_Still-Not-Visible.pdf</a></li></ul>



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<b>Who was involved in developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	
Emma Simpson, Amina staff, service users	
<b>Were those with lived experience of poverty involved in developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	
Emma Simpson, Amina staff, service users	
<b>What funding was used, if any, to support the development of the initial idea of the project?</b>	
None.	
<b>What in-kind resources were needed when developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	
Facilities	Office space
Equipment	Standard office and IT equipment
Local Knowledge	Local business and charity/third party organisational knowledge
Food and Drink	N/A
<b>What, if any, barriers did you have to overcome when developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	
COVID-19 and time investment needed to build trust with potential service users.	
<b>What, if anything, was helpful when developing the initial idea of the project?</b>	
Existing network of communications and collaboration with local and national charity and third sector organisations.	
<b>What was the timeline between the initial idea and the start of the project?</b>	
Three years for the current project as is.	



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**Who made the decision to introduce the project?**

Emma Simpson.

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## Early Development of the Project

Did you run a pilot project or carry out a feasibility study?

No

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### Accessing the Service and Engaging with Service Users

**Is there a referral process? If yes, how does the referral process work (self-referral, referred by other agencies, identified from an existing database)**

Informal referral process i.e., through service user contacts/ friends of service users. Self-referral, and informal referral by other agencies. Direct contact without a referral is also facilitated.

**How are potential clients made aware of the project?**

Primarily word of mouth, employments fairs, local events such as freshers etc.

**How do you keep in touch with service users? Do your service users have a preferred method of contact?**

Social media posts, poverty events etc, but telephone is the preferred method of contact for most service users.

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### Working with People with Lived Experience of Poverty

**Are those with lived experience of poverty involved in delivering the project? *If so, please describe below.***

Yes, staff members have lived experience of poverty as do volunteers.

**Are people with lived experience of poverty involved in managing the project or project governance? *If so, please describe below.***

Yes, at both board staff and volunteer level. There are a lot of people that have direct lived experience of poverty and of other issues that people the project works with might encounter.

**Are people with lived experience of poverty involved in any other aspect of the project? *If so, please describe below.***

Yes, promoting the project through word of mouth.

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### Leadership, Governance and Partnership Working

<b>Who is responsible for managing the project?</b>
Amina's Board of Trustees in collaboration with Emma Simpson; project manager.
<b>Is this the only responsibility of the person managing the project? <i>If not please describe the manager's wider roles and responsibilities.</i></b>
No. Emma's post entails that she networks and liaises with a holistic array of charities and third-party organisations including Poverty Alliance and the Child Poverty Action group. Emma also coordinates with other Amina projects inclusive of financial inclusion and peer support groups, in addition to managing Amina's frontline project Offices/departments.
<b>Is there a Project Steering Group? <i>If yes, who is involved in this and how does it work.</i></b>
No, but an informal steering group does exist through historical and current informal user feedback.
<b>If there is no Steering Group, what governance arrangements are in place to review strategy and performance?</b>
Strategy and performance review is facilitated through yearly annual reports published by Amina.

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### Links to Wider Policies, Strategies and Statutory Requirements

**Is the project part of a wider anti-poverty strategy? *If so, please give details.***

No formal strategy statement. However, strategies related to non- and accredited adult education and gender equality are somewhat embedded in the project's work.

**Is the project part of any other strategy? *If so, please give details.***

No

**Is the project delivering a service that is a statutory commitment. *If so, please give details.***

Yes, Amina projects are primarily publicly funded and contribute to helping the Scottish Government meet its statutory commitments related to child poverty cost-of-living crisis, food and energy poverty, educational poverty, and gender equality.

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## Funding

**Who funds the project? *Please give details.***

Funding comes from a range of sources including the Scottish Government, the Rank Foundation, Dundee City Council and Henry Duncan, as well as fundraising and individual donations.

**How much does the project cost?**

Approximately £65,000 per year to deliver the employability project in 2022-2023. Overall budget hard to define as it changes annually.

**Is future funding based on pre-agreed outcomes or outputs being delivered?**

Yes. All funding from Scottish Government or other grant funders is conditional. For example, for Henry Duncan funding that pays for financial advocacy work, there are quantitative target outcomes, such as, 200 women report that they know more about how they can get help with household poverty. For some other grant funders there are more qualitative target outcomes that are experiential.

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## Staffing and Resources

<b>Which paid staff are involved in delivering the project?</b>	
Yes: Approximately five part time paid staff members.	
<b>Are volunteers involved in delivering the project? <i>Please describe their role and their contribution.</i></b>	
Yes. Couple of volunteers who have helped out with tasks or as and when within the employability project and other Amina projects.	
<b>What in-kind resources do you need to deliver your project?</b>	
<b>Facilities</b>	Office buildings and space provided by other charity organisations at no cost.
<b>Equipment</b>	Collaborative agencies often provide such things as data sims.
<b>Local Knowledge</b>	Staff knowledge of the problems Muslim and BME women face within Scotland. Local Charity expertise and knowledge, service users lived experiences and needs influence service delivery.
<b>Food and Drink</b>	Halal sourced.
<b>For each of the in-kind resources listed above, who provides it?</b>	
<b>Facilities</b>	Not recorded.
<b>Equipment</b>	Charitable Amma Vodaphone (sim cards). Telephones. Microsoft Office Suite and Dynamics. Computers, laptops, and other standard office equipment.
<b>Local Knowledge</b>	Poverty Alliance, CAB, Smart Project. Smart works. Ambreen. (List is not exhaustive.)
<b>Food and Drink</b>	Local halal catering

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**Did you have to buy or develop new IT systems, software (databases, apps) or technology to deliver your project? *Please describe below.***

Microsoft Office and Dynamics Suite bought for the project.

**Was additional staff training required to deliver your project? *If so, please describe.***

Not for this project, although a small staff training budget is available to keep staff up to date with current technology and knowledge.

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## Monitoring and Evaluation

<b>What information, if any, do you collect about your project?</b>	
<b>Number of users</b>	Yes: Attendance of workshops and longitudinal data for one-on-one sessions.
<b>Profile of users</b>	Yes
<b>Experience of users</b>	Yes
<b>Anything else</b>	Milestones of client journey recorded. Demographic information when freely offered by clients.
<b>How often is data collected? Who collects the data?</b>	
Daily collected by frontline service staff.	
<b>Do you have baseline data on what things were like before the start of the project or before users started the project? <i>Please describe the type of baseline data that you have.</i></b>	
No	
<b>Do you produce an annual report? <i>Please provide details of what this includes.</i></b>	
Yes: Annual financial report and public free-to-access Amina report.	
<b>In what ways, if at all, do you use the data that you collect to adapt the service that you provide?</b>	
Data collection is used to improve, adapt, and expand services provided.	
<b>Have you employed an external organisation to formally evaluate your project? <i>If yes, please provide details.</i></b>	
No	



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**Do you intend to employ an external organisation to evaluate the service that you provide in the future? *If yes, please provide details.***

Not planned.

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### Reach and Impact

<b>What difference has the project made?</b>
<p>The difference made is giving people that would not ordinarily have access to resources provided by the project access and knowledge, as well as a space in which they feel safe to talk honestly about what is going on for them what they want, and where they will be treated as individuals.</p> <p>A lot of people that come through the project's doors would not necessarily have participated in just any project. Amina has succeeded in creating a rapport with communities they work with that has resulted in trust being built and demand for the service increasing through word-of-mouth advertising and positive experiences of past users.</p>
<b>How do you know this? What evidence demonstrates impact (metrics, interviews, feedback)?</b>
<p>Service user feedback and an increase in demand for the employability project and other projects offered by Amina. Evidence of impact also demonstrated in the annual report.</p>
<b>To what extent have the aims of the project been achieved?</b>
<p>On-going</p>
<b>How, if at all, have conditions changed since the project was introduced?</b>
<p>Increased demand that has went beyond Scotland's border.</p>
<b>If yes, has the project had the capacity to meet these changing conditions and demand? <i>Please describe and explain below.</i></b>
<p>Yes, at present in Scotland but not outwith.</p>
<b>Has the project had any unexpected or unintended outcomes? <i>If so, whether positive or negative, please describe.</i></b>
<p>Yes. A very small proportion of people have expressed they think it is inappropriate to push women's access to work. They have communicated they see the project as an erosion of more traditional values, and as criticising people who choose the path of not being in conventional form of employment.</p>

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**In your opinion, is the project having an impact on tackling child poverty? If so, please describe in what ways.**

Yes. The projects has helped some women in alleviating social poverty, child poverty, educational and financial poverty.

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### Learning from Experience

<b>What is working well?</b>
The personal approach and meeting people as individuals.
<b>What, if anything, is working less well?</b>
No identified challenges.
<b>What are the key learning points that you'd like to share with other practitioners? For example, is there anything that you would do differently?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Put in the time for the individual.</li><li>• Work as team.</li><li>• Remember that people's self-worth isn't determined by their economic productivity.</li></ul>
<b>What plans do you have to develop or expand the project in the future?</b>
To develop the project more into the direction of a more formal learning environment. It would be a long-time goal to function in the same way as an SQA centre.
<b>How easily do you think your project could be replicated in another setting?</b>
Fairly easily.

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