

TFN Impact Report

Name of your Organisation:	Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain
Name of the project TFN funded:	IWGB Legal department
Date Funded by TFN:	15 May 2017
Were you able to undertake your project as planned?	Yes
Can you describe and/or demonstrate the specific impact that TFN funding has had against your initial objectives?	<p>With TFN's help, the IWGB legal department has been able to help over 200 people over the period of a year, with 259 cases opened in 2017 and 72.6% of them closed successfully. 42 cases were still pending at the beginning of 2018 and the legal department opened a further 64 in 2018. Of these 106 cases (to 30th of March in 2018), 55 were closed, and 40 were successful or partially successful.</p> <p>TFN funding let us hire Giulia Rocco and, somewhat later, Andrea Agresta, both with law degrees and legal training. Positive changes in our funding situation meant we decided to spend TFN funding to obtain the same amount of work over a shorter period, hiring workers for three days a week rather than two, and spending the money over 6 months. This decision reflects the fact that we were confident we could continue to employ our staff for the rest of the year, and is indicative of an overall increase in funding to the legal centre. TFN money was crucial in facilitating this increase in funding because of the time that TFN gave us to write additional grants – we obtained substantial funding from the Trust for London and from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation in the period - and because it tided us over until our membership could take a portion of the slack. This membership growth was particularly strong in sections of the union (such as foster carers) where we tend to derive an immediate surplus. TFN money bought us vital time and gave us the confidence to pursue other funding.</p> <p>During the period of TFN funding (September 2017 to March 2018), the legal department was able to directly reach 172 people. As part of this total, Andrea and Giulia handled 44 cases during the period September 2017 until March 2018, handling some of the most complex problems that the union is engaged in. The cases dealt with by Andrea and Giulia were related to: unfair dismissal, redundancy, unlawful deduction of wages, status of employment, change in terms and conditions of employment, and discrimination/harassment.</p> <p>The work contained in these numbers included all the preparation work for bringing employment tribunals, and participating in work-based disciplinary and grievance procedures, as well as advising members and dealing with correspondence and other administration relating to these cases. In terms of employment tribunals all the cases dealt with by TFN funded caseworkers in fact ended before the hearing in a settlement, but the realistic prospect of a tribunal, and the preparatory work involved, was crucial to this beneficial outcome.</p> <p>While Giulia and Andrea have dealt with cases relating to our core</p>

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	<p>focus on employment law for outsourced workers in London, their participation, enabled by TFN, has allowed us to dramatically expand the scope of our operations, offering our services to a greatly expanded membership – now well over 2000 from around 1000 at the start of TFN funding. This expansion has also been marked in terms of the fields of expertise and the geographical reach of the legal department. With Giulia and then Andrea on board, this allowed others in the legal department to take on an increasing number of cases relating to abuses in the low paid ‘self employed’ economy (often called the ‘gig-economy’), with cases relating to private hire drivers, foster care workers, and delivery workers.</p> <p>Many of these are outside London, and the legal department has taken on cases all over the country, from Glasgow to Hampshire. This work has involved bread and butter litigation to defend members against unlawful and illegal practice at work but it has also involved cases that have set precedents or firmly established the law in several areas. This pioneering work would include: establishing for the first time employee status for some (albeit restricted) categories of foster care workers in Scotland, securing via the courts the first trade union recognition agreement for self employed ‘limb b’ workers, winning appeals for members against large companies in the gig-economy like UBER, and introducing a pioneering legal challenge to aspects of the law on outsourcing, with John Hendy QC, this last drawing on the human rights act. The implications of these cases would impact a very large number of workers, possibly in the millions.</p> <p>It should be noted that in our calculation below of the numbers affected by ‘indirect benefit’ we have not counted any of these impacts. Our ‘indirect benefit’ calculation is based on a) the wider membership of the union, that is clearly impacted by knowing that there is an effective legal department to defend their entitlements, and b) a conservative estimate of the number of dependents attached to each member consulting the legal department (I have calculated this at 1 dependent per worker, though the figure is almost certainly higher).</p> <p>Details of the more qualitative aspects of our impact are discussed below in relation to the ‘personal stories’. Recurring themes from members who have used the legal department is of feeling ‘dignity’ and ‘security’, and going from feeling like ‘zero’ or ‘invisible’ to a sense of being workers with equal legal status to others. Several stressed how this has impacted on their family lives.</p>
<p>What portion of the project did TFN fund?</p>	<p>33%</p>
<p>How many direct beneficiaries did the TFN funded project reach?</p>	<p>172</p>

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How many indirect beneficiaries did the TFN funded project reach?	2,644
Were you able to leverage further funding as a result of TFN support?	Yes
If yes, how much were you able to raise?	We were able to obtain further funding from several funders most significantly a grant of £100,500 from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. TFN funding helped us in two ways, first because they were impressed by the various external funders we were able to attract and second because they were impressed by our operation. TFN funding allowed us to hire staff and keep going as opposed to shrinking.
Did you receive any pro-bono support, volunteer offers or introductions as a result of the event?	No
How important was TFN funding in helping you achieve your objectives?	We wouldn't have been able to achieve our objectives without TFN funding
Since presenting at TFN, has your organisation undergone any other significant changes?	We have expanded in terms of membership, geographical focus and expertise, see above.
Do you have any other comments or feedback on the experience of the TFN process?	It was extremely valuable to us in terms of the resources brought to us and the confidence given to our organisation to pitch our ideas. A short time after receiving the money we were able to pitch successfully to the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for a large grant and TFN was extremely valuable experience.
Can you tell us any personal stories to highlight the value of the project?	<p>We would be happy to provide more extensive details of our work to TFN but we present here two brief indicative cases.</p> <p><i>Case 1:</i> TFN funded caseworker successfully assisted a cleaner who was unlawfully dismissed by her employer. The personal situation of the member assisted was particularly delicate, because, during that same time, she was victim of domestic violence from her ex-husband and the alleged misconduct that she was accused of was related to her personal situation. Thanks to the caseworker's legal and moral support she was able to establish that the charges were unfounded and that the dismissal was unlawful. She obtained substantial out-of-court settlement and was able to move on with her life within a couple of months. She has been able to move on with her life successfully and work and provide for herself and family</p> <p><i>Case 2:</i> TFN funded caseworker successfully assisted a cleaner that was made redundant during her maternity leave (therefore, for a discriminatory reason, because the company's decision was related to her maternity). Thanks to the caseworker's legal support, she obtained</p>

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	an significant out-of-court compensation (over £5,000), allowing her to reestablish financial solvency and move forward.
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