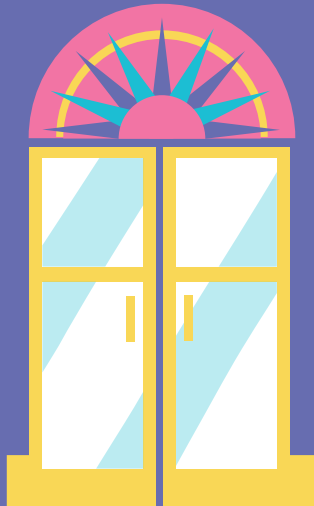


Phoenix COMMUNITY CINEMA

VOLUNTEER PROMOTER TOOLKIT



LOTTERY FUNDED



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Phoenix Community Cinema's (PCC's) Toolkit for volunteer promoters. We hope you find the information useful in setting up and running your film events. The Toolkit has been created in collaboration with local organisations which support people with additional needs to help PCC promoters make their events as inclusive as possible.

Bringing film screenings to community venues brings people who might be isolated from their communities together, brings high quality cultural events to rurally isolated communities, keeps community spending local and encourages people to support their local community venue.

Being a volunteer promoter can be enormously rewarding: promoting events to members of the local community is sociable and fun, volunteering improves mental wellbeing and promotes communities' social cohesion.

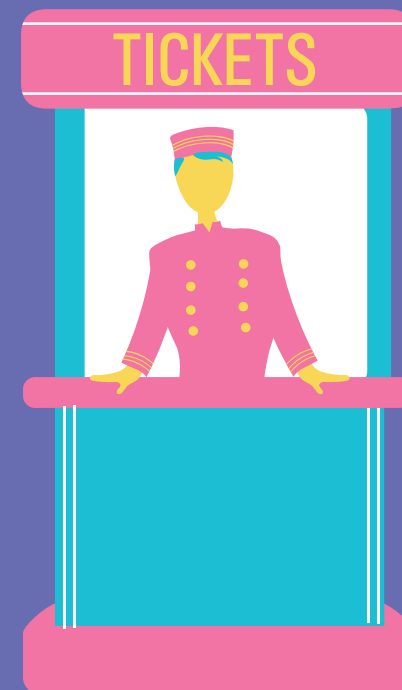
TOP TIP

Look out for Top Tips throughout the Toolkit from our volunteer promoters!

Showing great films in your community venue will bring people together, creating an accessible and friendly focal point in your community's calendar.

This guide draws on the experience of the many groups of volunteers who have supported the scheme over the years, and Phoenix's team of curators, coordinators, projectionists and development staff.

In response to our recent promoter survey in which promoters asked for support in reaching more vulnerable members of our communities, we have produced this guide in partnership with organisations Age UK, Vista, Action Deafness and the Values project at Voluntary Action Leicester.



SETTING UP YOUR GROUP



To put on events as part of Phoenix Community Cinema (PCC) you'll need to nominate a Lead Promoter who will liaise with Phoenix, and establish a support group which will help to deliver the events. You'll also need to open a community bank account so you can keep your cinema money separate. You could start with a group of neighbours who are interested in film or providing events for your local community, and you will need to consider setting up a constituted group if you decide to apply for grant funding.

1 COMMITTEE

All members of the group could share the responsibilities around running PCC events, but it is often sensible to allocate specific tasks to committee roles. You will need at least the following committee members: a Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. You could also consider a Marketing Officer or Fundraising Officer to support the committee's activities. Committee members should be voted in at the group's Annual General Meeting (AGM).

2 CONSTITUTION

It's advisable to have a constitution, which will let people know what your group's aims and objectives are. Include any policies, such as Equal Opportunities or Child Protection- essential if you're applying for funding but also general good practice.

Here is a link to an [example constitution](#).

3 MEETINGS

You will need to hold regular meetings at which you update on events, report finances, and make decisions about future actions. Your Secretary will need to take notes (minutes) of these meetings.

As a minimum, you must hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) each year, to which all members of the community are invited to attend, and the committee roles are voted in. AGMs can be a great opportunity to share your project with the whole community. You could use the event as a way to raise funds for your group, engage people who don't ordinarily attend your events and raise awareness of your group's work with Phoenix Community Cinema.

4 ACCOUNTS

Your Treasurer will need to keep a record of all income and expenditure for your group. This is particularly important if you plan to apply for funding.

Here is a link to an [example spreadsheet](#) for keeping your accounts up to date.

5 BANK ACCOUNT

Your group will need to set up a bank account so you can pay invoices and receive box office takings and hopefully, grants. See [this link](#) for information about choosing a suitable bank account.



6 POLICY DOCUMENTS

As a group supporting members of the local community and using public funds to operate, it is advisable to have a number of policies in place that all members of the group are familiar with and adhere to.

If you are showing films to children and young people, or members of the community who are vulnerable or have additional needs you will need to have policies in place to protect both members of the community and your volunteer group.

Here are some links to examples:

- ▶ [A guide for writing a child protection policy](#)
- ▶ [A model safeguarding policy](#)

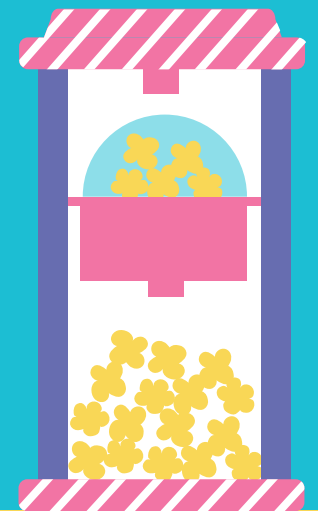
TOP TIP

"The Picturedrome was started following a request from the Village Hall Committee to find something which would provide another social event for the village. I suggested a monthly film night as I had just attended a similar event in Devon – and so I carried out research on other schemes. A support group of 6 was initially recruited by word-of-mouth. In addition Anna Hayward of Phoenix was extremely helpful. Our main support now comes from a loyal core of audience members who regularly attend."
(Cinema Organiser, Nether Heyford)

SETTING UP YOUR GROUP

OTHER THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Developing an inclusive audience: if you are trying to reach older members of your community you could consider having an 'older person's champion' on your committee, who will be tasked with thinking of ways to engage more effectively with elderly or isolated people.
- Could you be more proactive about inviting people with additional needs to join your committee or attend meetings?
- Does your constitution include information about being inclusive to people with additional needs?
- Talk to your Coordinator about ways you can engage with harder to reach members of your community.





YOUR VENUE

THE BASICS

Once your group has decided to be part of Phoenix Community Cinema you will need to identify a suitable venue where you can hold your events.

1. VENUE CHECKLIST

- Is there enough room for at least 50 seats?
- Is it within walking distance of your target audience? (most people attending PCC events walk to the venue). If not, is there adequate parking?
- Does the space have adequate black out blinds? If you are planning to show films during the day or between March and October this is essential; street lighting can also affect the projector's image. If not, can you work with the venue to provide these? See the fundraising section of this guide for more details.
- Is the space accessible for people using wheelchairs?
- Is the ceiling height sufficient for the screen (needs to be at least 3m or 10ft)

JOINING PHOENIX COMMUNITY CINEMA

Talk to your coordinator Pete Groschl in Leicestershire or Anna Hayward in Northamptonshire about becoming a member of PCC. There are lots of benefits of joining including:

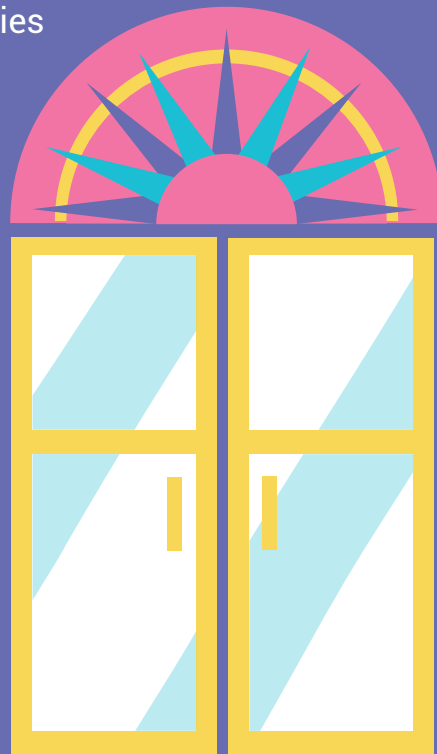
- Subsidised charges for Phoenix's services to deliver events.
 - We will arrange your screening license and can offer advice on obtaining the correct entertainment license for your venue.
 - Our experts' curatorial support to help promoters select and source the very best films available plus touring content and special events, talks and technical advice.
 - Audience development and marketing advice.
- Community Cinema screenings will all be listed on the Phoenix website: phoenix.org.uk
- Access to fundraising support from our team. Access to BFI Neighbourhood Cinema web portal and funding opportunities.
- Free membership to Phoenix for two promoters per group (worth £40) which includes two free tickets per year, exclusive member events, newsletters and promotions. You'll need to nominate two people who will complete our membership application form to receive their cards.
- Regular newsletter with information about the scheme, signposting to relevant organisations and possible funding opportunities.

2. BOOKING DATES AND LIAISING WITH VENUE

Once you have signed the PCC agreement you should liaise with your county coordinator to arrange suitable dates for your screenings. It's helpful at this stage to book a number of provisional dates with your venue. We often find that showing a film on the same day each month helps audiences to remember to attend each screening. We'll try our best to book in the dates of your choice for your events but we can't always guarantee them at busy times.

3. ROOM HIRE ARRANGEMENTS

Phoenix Community Cinema offers great benefits to local communities and brings significant grant funding to community venues. Wherever possible, we ask volunteers to try to negotiate waived or reduced room hire fees. We can help with these conversations if necessary.



4. SETTING UP FOR EVENTS SEATING, REFRESHMENTS, ROLE OF PROMOTERS

You should allow up to an hour to set up your space ready for a screening. Your team of volunteers should set out seats in rows with an aisle in the centre and a small table approx 4m from the screen to hold the projector. Your projectionist will set up the screen.

Selling refreshments at the beginning of the event or during an interval adds a social element to your screening and can help to generate additional funds for equipment, blinds or help to create a buffer for future events. It's good to designate a couple of volunteers to prepare and sell refreshments.

5. WELCOMING YOUR AUDIENCE

It's always a good idea for one of the volunteer team to stand up at the beginning of the screening and welcome the audience to the event. This is a great opportunity to promote future screenings, other forthcoming community events and of course to mention Phoenix Community Cinema's support!





YOUR VENUE

OTHER THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Key things to consider in your environment to make it safe and accessible for people with a visual impairment are:

- Lighting
- Colour contrast
- Clear signage
- Clear passageways
- Consistency of environment (not moving things around)
- Be aware of potential trip hazards
- Ensure ramps and steps are clearly marked



TOP TIP

"We try to do caberet style - with nibbles on the tables, table cloths and wine/beer to buy.

We find this makes it more of a night out than sitting in rows. We also have ice creams in the interval which people seem to like and free tea and coffee. We also have free biscuits and sometimes cakes."

MARKETING

THE BASICS Possibly the most important part of making your event a success is effectively getting the message out as far and wide as you can, in as many different ways as possible. Getting an audience to your event takes time but if your group uses a number of avenues to market its events you will soon develop a loyal audience.

By far and away the most effective mode of marketing PCC events is word of mouth, so tell everyone you know, everyone at the local shops, cafes, GPs surgeries and community groups, about your screenings. You should also consider...



POSTERS

Here is a [template](#) you can overprint with your event details.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook is a great way to keep in touch with your audience as you can encourage people to chat about the films, create polls about forthcoming film choices and build a local online community around your events.

Here are two short guides to [setting up](#) and [using](#) a social media account.

FLYERS

Simple A5 printed flyers with listings of your forthcoming films are useful for people to book dates in their diaries. Please mention Phoenix Community Cinema on all publicity materials. Here is a [link](#) to our logos.

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTERS & LOCAL PRESS

Community newsletters, Parish magazines and other local publications are a great way to tell local people about your events and are generally free. Send event details to local newspapers and radio stations and offer to talk to reporters about the scheme in your venue.

Check copy dates and send in listings or even short articles about your group and working with PCC. Including images from your previous events adds interest (check permission before using images of people).

As a member of PCC we ask that you always mention Phoenix Community Cinema in listings and publicity materials. This is most important as it ensures the scheme's funders are recognised. Here is a [link](#) to our logos.

TICKET SELLING ARRANGEMENTS

It's always useful to be able to sell tickets in advance if you can as you will feel more confident about the event with seats filled and money in the kitty.

Is there a member of the group who will take bookings over the phone? Is there a local shop who could hold tickets and cash for you? Remember to include these details on publicity materials.

FUNDRAISING

Raising additional funds for your film group is a great idea if you want to improve the cinema experience at your venue.

Perhaps you need to purchase black out blinds for the windows or more comfortable seating, or you might consider purchasing some or all of the screening kit.

Perhaps you'd like to hold a special film based event for families or local interest groups for which you'll need funds.

There are lots of ways you can raise funds for your group. Many promoter groups run raffles at their screenings, which over the course of a year can generate considerable sums. Perhaps your group could run a film quiz night and charge ticket prices to bring in additional money?

This cash can then be used as 'match' funding for grant applications. Many grant bodies expect a proportion of the overall amount requested to be provided by the applicant (usually 10% or more) plus 'in kind' support, which is any service or volunteered hours given without charge to the project.

OTHER THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Make publicity accessible to all members of your community.

When producing leaflets, flyers and posters, consider the following:

- Use a plain font such as Arial or Tahoma
- Use lower case (NOT ALL CAPITALS)
- Use of colour contrast
- Avoid putting text over images

TOP TIP


"Publicity is a key feature so we advertise in all the local free publications, the local Rothley Post (local newspaper), posters all around the village on notice boards, key lamp posts, and local neighbouring village noticeboards. We also put the forthcoming films to be shown on the reverse of the tickets so that folks taking their ticket home can see what's coming up in the next 3 months.

We go into the local OAP home with flyers and also go to bus stops on Loughborough market day to catch all the senior citizens making their trip into Loughborough (there is a captive audience of around 20 waiting for the bus). Flyers in local cafes and in the Library help the process.

Advertising is crucial ...



FUNDRAISING



Writing a grant application can seem like a daunting task, but grant giving bodies exist to give out grants – you just have to help them give grants to your group!

There are some excellent local sources of funding support. Try these as a starting point:

www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/leicestershire

www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/northamptonshire

- District and Borough Councils
- Awards For All
www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/awards-for-all
- Leics and Rutland Community Foundation
www.llrcommunityfoundation.org.uk/
- Neighbourhood Cinema Equipment Fund
www.bfi.org.uk/neighbourhoodcinema/funding-and-support
- Northamptonshire Community Foundation
www.ncf.uk.com

1. PLANNING YOUR APPLICATION

- Research the funding body – what are their objectives and how can you help them meet these?
- Costs – get quotes for any equipment/work that needs to be bought in.
- Project outline – what do you want to achieve?
- Who will help to achieve these – CVs of people involved and their experience of delivering similar work.
- Letters of support from partners of previous projects.
- Outcomes – what will your project achieve?
- Who will benefit and how?
- What are the wider benefits to your community?





NOW SHOWING

2. STRENGTHS OF THE PROJECT

- Part of a wider, well established programme.
- Lots of experience of managing community events.
- Lots of volunteer time donated and wide expertise of volunteers.
- Proven ability to fundraise and manage funds – all those raffles and box office shares can be used as match funding to lever in funds.
- Working with the wider community, local authorities and other organisations.
- Support of community venues to develop sustainability.
- Delivering outcomes in your local community.
- Collaborating with other groups.

WHAT THE FUNDERS WILL BE LOOKING FOR

- Will it work?
- Can the group manage the project and deliver it?
- Who will the project be of benefit to?
- Is it costed out properly?
- Does it meet the criteria? (cut and paste these into your application form and make sure you address each one at some point in your application!)
- Will it be a successful project we can use as a case study?
- Can you help meet government targets with your project?
- What are the 'hot topics' that can be addressed? Look for research papers and government documents that back up your projected outcomes.
- See the New Economics Foundation for leading research about wellbeing
- Can you prove it? How will you collect evidence?
- Who will use it? – How do you know?
Is it accessible? How will you make it so?
- Questionnaires, interviews, mapping, consultation events, parish plan groups.
- Capture how people feel before and after the project through interviews, questionnaires etc, to measure impact.

FUNDRAISING

3. HOW WILL YOU EVALUATE?

- Overall aims of the project: Did you achieve these?
- How do you know?
- How will you engage local people? Workshops, events, advertising, social media.
- Methodologies: Questionnaires, interviews, discussions, informal chats, 'post it polls', comment boards, smiley face charts, thought trees, comment cards, Facebook comments, Twitter responses.

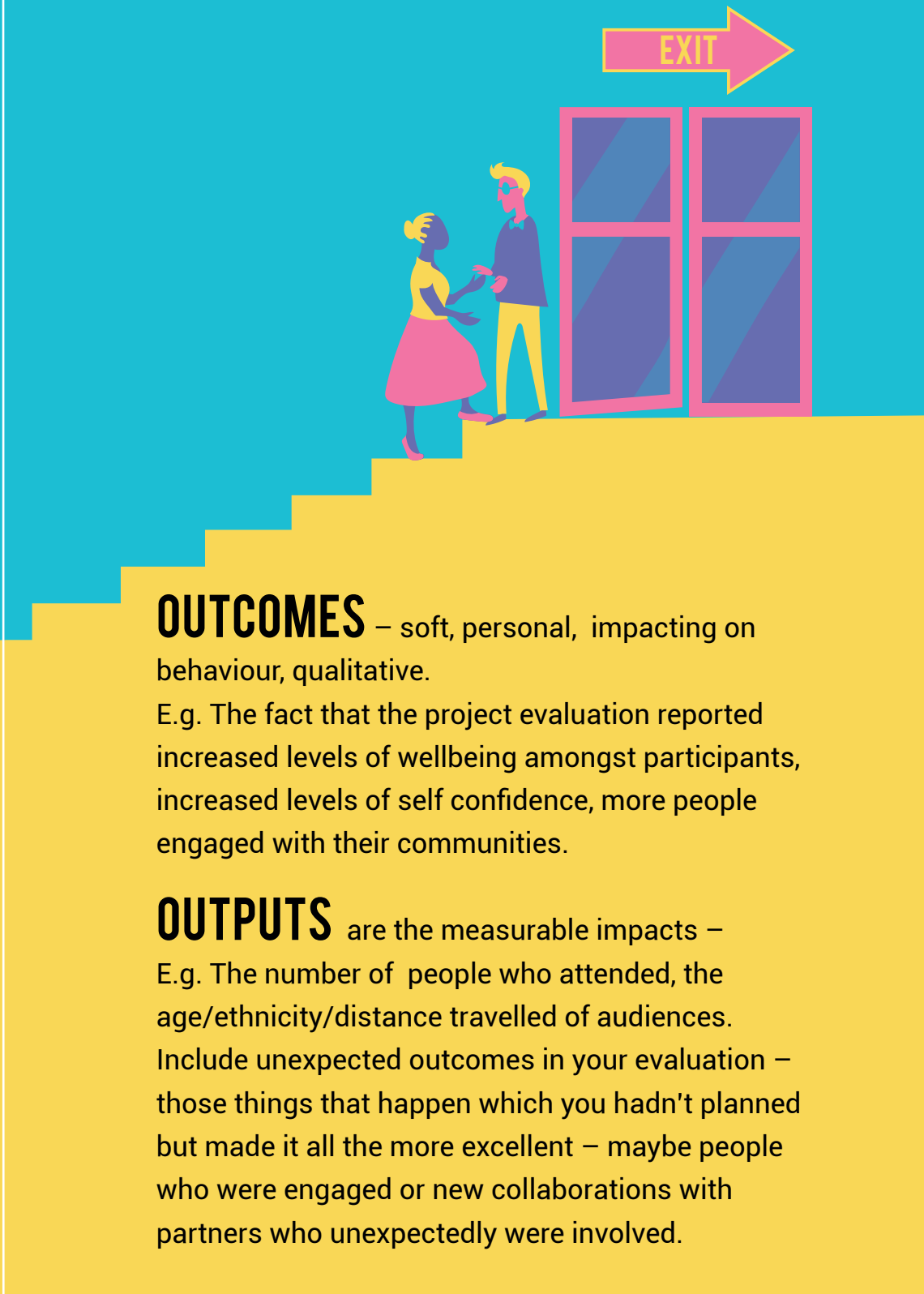
Evaluating your project is a really important part of your application as it helps the funder to understand what outcomes you have brought about by delivering



OUTCOMES – soft, personal, impacting on behaviour, qualitative.

E.g. The fact that the project evaluation reported increased levels of wellbeing amongst participants, increased levels of self confidence, more people engaged with their communities.

OUTPUTS are the measurable impacts – E.g. The number of people who attended, the age/ethnicity/distance travelled of audiences. Include unexpected outcomes in your evaluation – those things that happen which you hadn't planned but made it all the more excellent – maybe people who were engaged or new collaborations with partners who unexpectedly were involved.



FUNDRAISING

OTHER THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Copy of accounts.
- Letters of support.
- Anecdotal evidence of need, impact of previous work.
- Skills audit of your team – anything missing that you need to buy in? Training could be included in your bid
- Quotes for work to be done.
- Work out time frames – when are you going to start, how much time do you need for planning, delivery, and evaluation.
- Keep looking for alternative sources of funding – in case you are unsuccessful.
- Develop your 'elevator pitch' - can you sell your project in a nutshell?
- Get feedback if you get turned down and resubmit.

GOODLUCK!

Phoenix Community Cinema has been supporting volunteers to promote great film in community venues across Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire since 2004. The scheme now brings our specially selected programme of film to over 34,000 audience members each year through events hosted by over 60 groups of volunteers donating over 60,000 hours of their time each year to the scheme.

This toolkit has been produced by Phoenix Community Cinema using National Lottery funds through the Big Lottery.

To find out about screenings in your community, and for further information about Phoenix Community Cinema, please visit www.phoenix.org.uk