



## **Barrow Cadbury Trust tips for grantees on writing and compiling a report**

### **Introduction**

For most of the Trust's grantees a report is the final 'output' of their work. However, it may be helpful to think about other ways to disseminate your project/research/campaign in addition or instead of e.g. infographics, podcasts, films, or animations and also whether to just produce an executive summary rather than a long report which may not get read.

### **Audience**

Before you start writing up the results of your research, project, or any other work the Trust has supported you in – think about your audience and what you are hoping to achieve with your report or other output. Ask yourself:

**Who will read it? Policy-makers? Stakeholders?**

**Is it written in accessible and plain English?**

**Would a summary, with a separate, longer report, be more or equally effective?**

**How will you disseminate it? Do you need a communications plan?**

**What are the most important points to make and have those points been made clearly?**

Don't forget – we can help you disseminate your work through our own networks so do let us know when something is imminent.

### **Why publish?**

Our grantees publish around 20-30 reports a year under the auspices of Barrow Cadbury Trust. We help grantees to disseminate the findings, recommendations etc. to varying degrees depending on our resources at the time. We would like to see a draft of any report **at least two weeks** before publication. This is to ensure that your conclusions and the findings you might want to promote to policy makers are easily accessible, well-expressed, clear, and useful to your audiences.

Over the years we have seen many excellent reports launched but overshadowed by other news only to then sit on a shelf and be forgotten. The Trust's aim is for the reports we fund to have a shelf life and influence beyond the launch day and to have content which can easily be extracted and used for different audiences and on different platforms – i.e. websites, blogs, twitter, etc. To this end we have produced this guidance on writing and putting together a report which we hope you will find useful. It is not intended to be prescriptive but to serve as a reminder of what matters in a report, and to remind us that in a world full of information and news we need to be smart to get some attention.

## **What are the essentials for drafting a report?**

### **1. Title**

First things first – think of a catchy title which, if it doesn't say what the report is about also needs a sub-heading/strap line to explain it.

### **2. Branding**

Most grantees use their own branding, and usually (but not always) the Trust needs its logo and charity number on it. It doesn't have to be on the front cover and can be on the inside front cover or back cover. We also have short and longer versions of text about the Trust which you can put on the report:

The Barrow Cadbury Trust is an independent, charitable foundation, committed to bringing about socially just change.

If you would like the long version [email Diana Ruthven, Communications Manager](#) for a copy.

### **3. Logo use**

Please don't use our logo without asking our permission first. And if/when we authorise use of our logo please don't distort or corrupt it! If you'd like a copy of our logo [email Rosie Mitchell-Hudson](#) and let her know the format you need (Jpeg, Ping, EPS) and the context it is being used in – e.g. website, publication, Powerpoint etc.

### **4. Date**

Always put the date somewhere clearly on the report

### **5. Creative Commons**

If you'd like your report to be freely available you need to include a statement about [Creative Commons](#).

### **6. Contents page**

This is not essential, but is helpful in a report over a certain length.

## **7. Exec summary**

An executive summary explaining the key findings/recommendations/conclusions is always useful either as a separate publication or as part of the report (usually at the beginning). This can be really useful content for twitter, and other social media platforms. For journalists or policy makers it may also be the only thing they read.

## **8. Charity number**

Always put yours and Barrow Cadbury Trust's charity number (1115476) somewhere on the report (either on inside cover or the back cover).

## **9. Glossary**

If the report contains technical expressions or acronyms a glossary of terms may be useful.

## **Writing and layout of your report**

- We recommend you write your report so it is easy to read and in plain English. Use short sentences where you can, try not to use jargon or acronyms, and if you do use an acronym make sure to explain it in full in brackets after the first time you use it as well as in the glossary.

- **Headings**

Try to break up your text with clear headings which can also be highlighted on the contents page.

- Use tables, graphics, infographics etc where you can.

- **Layout**

Think about how easy your report is to read. Is there plenty of white space around the text, is the text size/font large enough (size 12 font is the recommended size for easy reading). Should you use a different number of columns on different pages? Use colour for the headings to make them stand out. Use a clear font such as Helvetica or Arial which is easy to read (unless of course your style guide says you should use a particular font).

- **Size of report**

Please be mindful that if you do use graphics they can make a file digitally large. To upload to our website a report has to be a maximum of 12 mb. If you're not sure about the size of your report ask your designer if they can create a hi-res and lo-res version for you.

## **Structure of the Report**

A report typically has the following elements:

- **Executive Summary.** Your report will begin with the summary, which is written once the report is finished. As the first item the reader encounters, this is the most important section of the document. They will likely use the summary to decide how much of the report they need to read so make it count! The summary can be a stand alone publication or part of the report, or both. The standard size summary is 4-8 pages. **If your main report is longer than 20 pages it will need an executive summary.**
- **Introduction:** Provide a context for the report and outline the structure of the contents. Identify the scope of the report and any particular methodologies used.
- **Body:** It's now time to put your writing skills to work! This is the longest section of the report and should present background details, analysis, discussions, and recommendations for consideration. Draw upon data and graphics to support your position.
- **Recommendations:** only needed if your report is for policy makers. It may be easiest to suggest recommendations for different groups – ie. For practitioners, for policy makers etc.
- **Conclusion:** Bring together the various elements of the report in a clear and concise manner. Identify next steps.

### **Editing your report**

The first draft of the report is rarely perfect so you will need to edit and revise the content. If possible, set the document aside for a few days before reviewing or ask a colleague to review. The Barrow Cadbury team will always review your report and will also suggest edits if they think they make the report more readable, powerful, and impactful.

- **Make sure to attribute references to stats or quotes**

### **What else could you do with the report?**

Could some of the content be extracted for a presentation, a blog or series of blogs?

Could a twitter plan for your followers and stakeholders be extracted from the contents?

Could the graphics be used on Twitter or Facebook?  
Could any of the content be used as stand alone content?

## **Checklist:**

- Charity number (yours and Barrow Cadbury's and any other funders')
- Logos
- Date of report
- Introduction
- Executive Summary

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