

Heritage Lottery Fund

Grantee and Applicant Customer Care Survey Reporting 2016

Produced by BDRC Continental August 2016

Contents

1. Contents	2
2. Executive Summary.....	3
3. Introduction and Methodology	9
4. Applicant Customer Care Survey	13
5. Satisfaction overall.....	18
6. The pre-application process.....	24
7. The application process	29
8. Assessment	35
9. Project development – 2nd round Applicants	36
10. Grantee Customer Care Survey.....	40
11. Overall satisfaction	44
12. The project lifecycle	46
13. Project costs and completion dates.....	49
14. HLF Support	54
15. Appendix 1 – Statistical reliability.....	56
16. Appendix 2 – Switching methodologies.....	57

Executive Summary

Applicants

Overall

- On average, Applicants rated HLF's overall handling of their application 7.99 out of 10, a slight drop on ratings in 2015 (8.08/10). The drop in ratings is also evident when both years are weighted to the same proportion of accepted and rejected applicants.
- 86% of applicants were very/fairly likely to recommend the HLF to another organisation, a marginal drop on the 90% that stated this in 2015. 88% of Applicants stated they would consider applying to the HLF for a grant in the future. Less than 1 in 10 rejected Applicants would *not* apply for a grant with the HLF again.
- Around 4 in 5 Applicants (81%) had applied for a grant elsewhere at some point in the previous 5 years. Almost half of these applicants (47%) felt that the experience with HLF was better than with other organisations, significantly more than the 17% that felt the experience was worse. 'Grants for places of worship' showed a high propensity of stating that the experience of applying for a grant with HLF was worse than when they had applied with another organisation, 27% saying so.
- 98% of approved Applicants stated their project would not have gone ahead as planned had HLF funding not been available. Half (50%) stated their project would not have gone ahead at all.
- 94% of approved Applicants said that their project would not have gone ahead as planned if HLF had required greater partnership funding.

The pre-application process

- Around a third (35%) of single and first-round applicants first learned about the HLF through the work their organisation carries out. Around 1 in 6 (17%) learned about HLF through word of mouth and 1 in 8 Applicants (12%) through the HLF website
- The HLF website was the main source of information about HLF Grant schemes, 91% of Applicants consulting it at some point pre-application.
- 93% of Applicants had contact with HLF staff before making their application, compared to 94% in 2015. Also consistent with 2015, email and telephone

correspondence were the most common modes of contact. On average, Applicants had 4.15 different types of contact with HLF on average.

- Of the Applicants that *did* speak to HLF staff during the pre-application period, 90% rated them very/fairly helpful; 66% describing them as 'very helpful'. 97% of accepted Applicants and 81% of rejected Applicants rated staff as helpful.
- HLF was rated 'helpful' on the majority of aspects around the application process. Particularly high 'helpful' ratings were given for HLF's aid in 'thinking about heritage and how it is looked after' (75% rating very/fairly helpful), 'planning other activities' (73%), 'identifying project benefits and beneficiaries' (71%) and 'planning project development and management' (71%).
- Around 1 in 7 (14%) of Applicants stated that it is unlikely that they would have submitted an application for funding without HLF help. However, 4 in 5 (80%) stated that the advice they received from HLF helped them to produce an improved application, 93% amongst approved Applicants and 63% amongst rejected Applicants.

The pre-application process

- Almost all Applicants (99%) submitted their application online. Ratings of the process are consistent with 2015, the vast majority of Applicants giving 'very/fairly' good ratings for 'overall ease of use' (84%), 'speed of use' (81%), 'presentation of questions and help notes' (84%), 'layout and design' (80%) and 'ease of adding attachments' (81%). 'Ease of adding attachments' was most likely to receive negative feedback, 8% rating the process 'very/fairly poor'.
- 'Making the process shorter/faster' was the most commonly suggested improvement to the online application process, followed by 'the ability to save the application before submitting it' and 'better online guidance'.
- The majority of single and first round Applicants were positive about the ease with which they were able to find information on the HLF website to make their application, 80% stating it was 'very/fairly easy'. However, only 25% described the process as 'very easy'.
- The vast majority of Applicants (97%) recall consulting HLF guidance notes when preparing their applications. Around half (49%) recall the exact notes they consulted. The most commonly recalled guidance notes were the 'application guidance for the programme you were applying to' (67%), followed by 'activity plan guidance' (40%), 'evaluation guidance' (39%) and community participation (35%).

- The majority of guidance notes were rated positively. The notes with the lowest 'very/fairly good' rating were 'reducing environmental impacts', 'making your project accessible for disabled people' and 'conservation plan guidance'.
- The majority of Applicants (76%) agreed that they clearly understood the type and amount of information they were required to provide in their application and a similar proportion (73%) that the information was 'appropriate and proportionate'.
- Almost half of Applicants (47%) disagreed that 'applying for HLF funding imposed unnecessary burdens upon our organisation', a further 26% neither agreeing nor disagreeing. Around 1 in 4 of Applicants (27%) agreed the funding imposed unnecessary burdens, a similar proportion to 2015. 'Grants for places of worship' were most likely to agree with this statement (44% doing so). For the majority of applications (83%), more than one person was involved in preparing the application. Over half of the projects (53%) involved more than 3 people. 39% of Applicants sought help from an outside organisation to prepare their application.

Assessment

- 54% of single and first round Applicants were contacted by their Grants Officer while their application was being considered.
- The majority of rejected Applicants were positive about the application experience, although a notable minority provided negative ratings. 58% agreed that HLF clearly stated why their application was unsuccessful (28% disagreed); 49% agreed that 'HLF provided useful feedback on how we could amend our project' (36% disagreed); and 50% agreed that 'preparing the application was a value to the organisation...' (30% disagreed). 38% of rejected Applicants agreed that the reasons given for the application being rejected were reasonable; 37% disagreed.

Project development – second round Applicants

- The mean score for the overall handling of the process given by second round Applicants was 8.38/10, compared to 8.47/10 in 2015.
- Around two thirds of second round Applicants (64%) had an HLF-appointed mentor for the development phase of their project. As in 2015, of those that did, the vast majority (93%) stated that their mentor was helpful – 72% very helpful.
- There was some negativity around the type and amount of information HLF required second round applicants to provide in progress reports, only 23% strongly agreeing that it was 'appropriate and proportionate'.
- The vast majority of second round Applicants (97%) submitted their application online. Those that did were generally positive about the process, 67% describing the overall ease of use as 'very/fairly good'.

- Opinions of the online application layout and design have improved, 65% rating it as 'very/fairly' good, compared to 54% in 2015, as has 'the presentation of questions and help notes' (81% compared to 78% in 2015).
- Ratings of 'speed of use' have dropped since 2015 (from 72% to 67%) as has 'ease of adding attachments' (from 62% to 60%). As with first-round projects, ease of adding attachments was most likely to receive negative feedback, around 1 in 5 (22%) describing the process as poor. When asked to suggest improvements to the online application, 'making it easier to send attachments' was the most common mention, 19% suggesting this. 66% of second round Applicants rated the ease with which they were able to find information on the HLF website to help their application as 'very/fairly easy,' a 6 percentage point rise on 2015 when 60% gave this rating.
- 97% of second round Applicants recall looking at guidance notes when they were preparing their application. 63% of second round Applicants recall the specific guidance notes they read or used during the application.
- 85% of second round Applicants were contacted by a HLF grants officer during their second round assessment, a similar proportion that reported this in 2015 (89%).
- The majority of second round projects (57%) dealt with just one grant officer during their application, around a third (31%) two grant officers. The vast majority of projects (91%) found the contact with the grants officer 'very/fairly helpful'.
- 60% of second round Applicants used professionals from outside their organisation to help prepare their application. The majority used this help for 'project and cost planning' (71%) and a notable proportion used it for 'future management and maintenance planning' (55%); 45% for activities planning and 42% for conservation planning.

Grantees

Overall ratings

- Ratings of the overall service provided by HLF have marginally declined since the same period in 2015, Grantees giving a mean score of 8.94/10, compared to 9.06/10 12 months before.
- As in 2015, around three-quarters of Grantees (77%) had received a grant from another organisation in the past 5 years. 39% stated that the experience with HLF was better than with the other organisation and 40% that it was about the same.

The project lifecycle

- The vast majority of Grantees (90%) stated that they received the go-ahead to start their project within the timescale they expected. Only 6% felt that their project was delayed.
- Nearly 9 in 10 (85%) Grantees contacted their Grants Officer while their project was being implemented, a similar proportion to the 86% that did so in 2015. Of those that did, the vast majority (98%) felt that the contact was helpful; 85% very helpful.
- Almost 9 in 10 Grantees (87%) submitted their monitoring form online - a similar proportion to 2015 (91%).
- Consistent with previous years, the majority (93%) of Grantees stated that the HLF was 'very/fairly effective' in making payments within this specified time, 76% stating they were 'very effective'.

Project costs and completion dates

- 1 in 4 Grantees (25%) reported that their project costs increased during the implementation of their project, a slightly lower proportion than in 2015 (29%) The costs increased by no more than £5,000 for two thirds (65%) of these Grantees.
- Of the Grantees that did encounter an increase in project cost, 11% had at least some of their costs met by HLF, an 8 percentage point decrease on 2015 (19%). 87% of Grantees had none of the extra costs covered by HLF, compared to 81% in 2015.
- Projects were most likely to have met extra costs via their own reserves, 31% having done so, a significant increase on the 19% that did so in 2015. 21% secured funding from elsewhere, a 4 percentage point drop on 2015. Only 4% of Grantees whose increased costs were not entirely covered by HLF were unable to meet them (6% in 2015).
- As in 2015, 'underestimating the time/cost involved' (43%) was the most common reason given for project cost increases. 'More time and effort was needed to manage the project' was the next most common reason given (31%) a significant 13 percentage point increase on 2015. 'Faced by events we had not anticipated' (26%) was the third most common reason given for project cost increases.
- Just over half of Grantees (54%) reported that the completion date of their project was extended or delayed, 10 percentage points more than in 2015 (44%). 'Faced by events we had not anticipated' (34%), 'more time and effort needed to manage

the project' (31%) and 'underestimating the time/cost involved' (22%) were the most common reasons cited.

HLF Support

- Three quarters of Grantees (75%) agreed that HLF provided effective support to promote the delivery of their project to time and cost, a significant drop on the 82% that gave this rating in 2015. 81% agreed that their Grant Officer showed good knowledge and understanding of their project, a drop on 86% in 2015.
- A third of people (33%) spoke to other people involved in HLF-funded projects, higher than the 27% of people that did so in 2015. 91% of Grantees that spoke to another HLF-funded project described the contact as beneficial, 50% highly beneficial. The contact was most likely to be beneficial in providing shared experiences (73%), sharing best practice (53%), providing someone to discuss things with (47%) and providing support (21%).
- The majority of Grantees agreed that the evaluation HLF requested on project completion was appropriate in terms of depth and scope (81%) and that the exercise was useful to them (83%). Ratings of the evaluation's usefulness have dropped significantly since 2015 (89%).

Introduction and Methodology

Introduction

This report summarises the findings from research conducted amongst:

- **Applicants** that received a decision about their HLF grant application between April 2015 and March 2016 and
- **Grantees** that completed their projects between April 2015 and March 2016.

Applicants and grantees were contacted by email in November 2015 and June 2016 and invited to take part in an online survey. The online methodology marks a departure from previous years when the research was completed by telephone (see methodology section 3.3 below for more information).

Research objectives

Broadly speaking the **Applicant** questionnaire explores the following areas of respondents' experience in applying for a HLF grant:

- overall ratings and propensity to recommend
- comparisons to experience with other grant providers
- dealings with HLF staff
- the application process amongst successful Applicants – methods of applying; ratings; suggested improvements
- the applications process amongst rejected Applicants – ratings of the application rejection process
- the development phase – HLF appointed mentors; HLF grants staff
- the assessment period

The **Grantees** questionnaire explores the following elements of grantees' experience:

- relationships with grant officers
- ease of using monitoring forms
- external monitors
- mentors
- costs
- overall ratings and propensity to recommend
- comparisons to experience with other grant providers

Methodology

BDRC Continental conducted two waves of online research with HLF Grantees and Applicants projects in November 2015 and June 2016. All eligible projects were contacted by email at the start of each fieldwork month and invited to complete an online survey by the end of the month. Projects that hadn't completed the survey were given 2 reminder emails to do so.

This year's online methodology marks a departure from the telephone methodology that was used in previous years. To ensure a smooth transition to the new methodology, a pilot online survey was conducted alongside the telephone survey in June 2015. Both survey samples were matched and weighted to replicate the known applicants and grantee project populations. The purpose of the online pilot was to understand the response differences by question types, and to provide a comparison benchmark for this year's research. Comparisons to 2015 in this survey therefore refer exclusively to the online pilot. Where figures from research before 2015 are cited, these refer to the telephone surveys and should be treated as indicative only. For a full explanation of the differences in response by methodology please go to '**Appendix 2: Switching Methodologies**' at the end of this report.

Understanding the data in this report

The key findings are illustrated by charts and tables throughout this report. Commentary is provided on overall results and any statistically significant differences between sub-groups are reported on. All figures are quoted in the charts as percentages and the base size from which the percentage is derived is indicated at the foot of the charts.

Please be aware that the percentage figures for the various sub-samples or groups need to differ by a certain number of percentage points for the difference to be statistically significant. This number will depend on the size of the sub-group sample and the percentage finding. The statistical reliability of our findings is outlined in the appendix in this report.

Use of dates

There are a number of possible dates that could be used to present this data; research year, report publication year, fieldwork period or project decision/completion period. For the purposes of clarity, all dates in this report refer to the 'report publication year'. The below table illustrates the date categories that correspond with each report publication year.

Research year	Report publication year	Fieldwork period	Project Decision/Completion period	Methodology
11	2016	Autumn 2015 Spring 2014	Apr 15 – Mar 16	Online
10	2015	Autumn 2014 Spring 2015	Apr 14 – Mar 15	Telephone (Online pilot run alongside telephone in June)
9	2014	Autumn 2013 Spring 2014	Apr 13 – Mar 14	Telephone
8	2013	Autumn 2012 Spring 2013	Apr 12 – Mar 13	Telephone
6/7	2012	Spring 2011 Autumn 2011 Spring 2012	Jan 11 – Mar 12	Telephone
5	2011	Spring 2010 Autumn 2010	Jan 10 – Dec 10	Telephone
4	2010	Spring 2009 Autumn 2009	Jan 09 – Dec 09	Telephone
3	2009	Spring 2008 Autumn 2008	Jan 08 – Dec 08	Telephone
2	2008	Spring 2007 Autumn 2007	Jan 07– Dec 07	Telephone
1	2007	Spring 2006 Autumn 2006	Jan 06 – Dec 06	Telephone

Tracking results

The switch to an online methodology means that comparisons to surveys prior to 2015 should be treated with caution. For a full explanation of the differences in response by methodology please go to '**Appendix 2: Switching Methodologies**' at the end of this report

Further, both Applicants and Grantees questionnaires changed substantially in 2009 and although some key measures remained the same (and trend data has been presented where possible), the sequence of the questions has changed, creating a potential order effect. These types of changes can have an impact on the way respondents frame their responses and so, where applicable, it is not advisable to make direct comparisons between the last six waves of research and research carried out in and before 2009.

Applicant Customer Care Survey

Applicant response and sample breakdown

Survey invites were sent to 2,948 applicants from whom 1,600 responses were received generating a response rate of 54%.

The online pilot survey revealed that some types of applicants are more likely to respond to the survey than others. For example, accepted applicants are more likely to respond than rejected. Therefore, to ensure the data in this report represents the full applicant population, it is necessary to weight responses by known sample information. The Applicants responses were weighted by the following sample criteria:

- **Project type**
 - Accepted, Rejected
- **Grant awarded**
 - £10,000 or less, £10,000 to £99,999, £100,000 to £1,999,999, £2 million to £4.9 million, £5 million +
- **Region**
 - East Midlands, West Midlands, North East, London, North West, Wales, Yorkshire and The Humber, South East, South West, Northern Ireland, Scotland, East of England
- **Programme**
 - First World War, Grant for places of worship, Heritage Enterprise, Heritage Grants, Landscape Partnership, Our Heritage, Parks for people, Start-up grants/Skills for the future, THI, transition funding, Young Roots, Collecting cultures

The following tables compare the profile of respondents with the profile of the total sample population.

Grant programme

Programme	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
Catalyst: Small Grants	<1%	<1%	<1%
First World War	9%	10%	9%
Grants for places of worship	14%	15%	14%
Heritage Enterprise	1%	1%	1%
Heritage Grants	13%	14%	13%
Landscape Partnership	1%	<1%	1%
Our Heritage	29%	28%	29%
Parks for people	1%	1%	1%
Sharing Heritage	20%	19%	20%
Start-up grants	3%	3%	3%
Transition funding	1%	1%	1%
Young Roots	7%	6%	7%
Townscape Heritage	1%	1%	1%

Organisation type/1

Organisation type	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
Church organisation or other faith-based group	17%	19%	17%
Commercial organisation	6%	5%	5%
Community/voluntary	55%	57%	58%
Local authority	7%	7%	7%
Other public sector	13%	11%	12%
Blank	2%	1%	1%

Decision maker

Decision making	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
Committee	19%	21%	20%
Delegated	73%	74%	74%
Board	8%	6%	6%

Region

Region	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
East Midlands	6%	7%	6%
East of England	8%	9%	8%
London	13%	12%	13%
North East	7%	7%	7%
North West	11%	11%	11%
Northern Ireland	4%	4%	4%
Scotland	8%	8%	8%
South East	10%	11%	10%
South West	9%	9%	9%
Wales	6%	6%	6%
West Midlands	9%	8%	9%
Yorkshire and The Humber	8%	8%	8%

Grant awarded

Region	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
£10,000 or less	20%	23%	20%
£10,001 - £99,999	22%	25%	23%
£100,000 - £1,999,999	16%	16%	16%
£2,000,000 - £4,999,999	3%	2%	1%
£5million or more	<1%	1%	<1%
Unsuccessful	40%	34%	40%

Heritage Area

Heritage Area	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
Historic buildings and monuments	29%	30%	29%
Industrial maritime and transport	4%	4%	5%
Intangible heritage	24%	22%	23%
Land and biodiversity	10%	10%	11%
Museums, libraries, archives and collections	12%	14%	13%
Community Heritage	20%	20%	20%

Decision

Decision	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
Approved	60%	66%	60%
Rejected	40%	34%	40%

Satisfaction overall

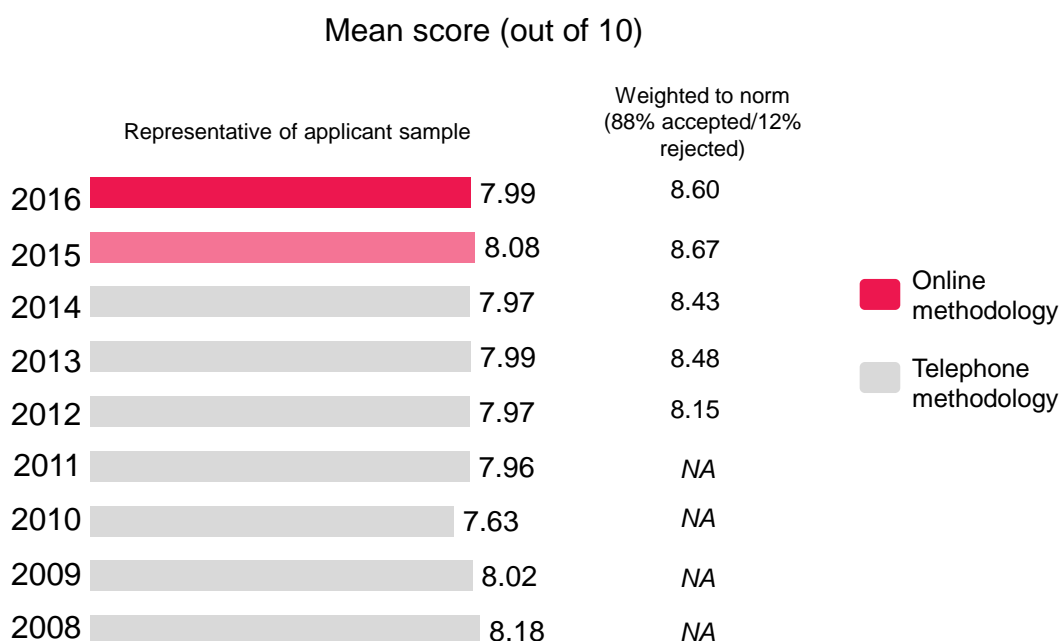
Overall handling of the application process

Applicants were asked to rate HLF’s handling of their application overall on a scale of 1-10 (1 being very poor and 10 very good). Ratings are relatively consistent with previous years, Applicants giving a mean score of 7.99 out of 10, compared to 8.08 in 2015.

As in previous years, we have weighted this year’s responses to the proportion of approved and rejected Applicants interviewed in 2007/8. This calculation allows us to ensure that ratings changes are driven by the application experience rather than varying proportions of accepted or rejected respondents. The overall ‘weighted’ mean score for 2016 is 8.60, a slight drop on the 8.67 reported in 2015.

Chart showing ratings of the overall handling of the application process

Overall handling of the application process (mean score)



Base: All applicants: 2007 (643), 2008 (631), 2009 (601), 2010 (544), 2011 (450), 2012 (675), 2013 (1308), 2014 (1748), 2015(507), 2016 (1600)

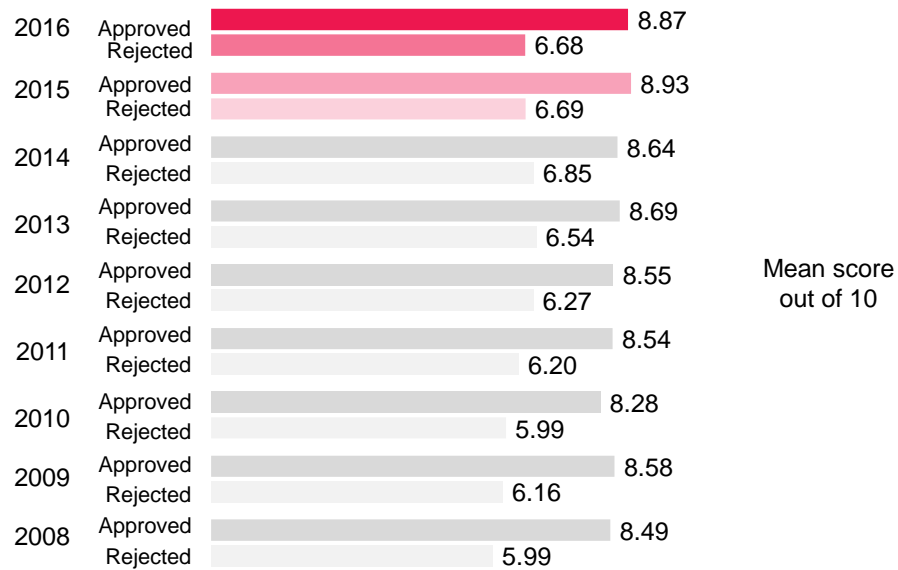


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Approved Applicants tend to provide higher ratings of the application process than rejected Applicants. In 2016, approved Applicants rated HLF's handling of their application as 8.87/10 compared to 6.68/10 for rejected Applicants. Both figures have dropped slightly since 2015, although not significantly.

Chart showing ratings of the application process by approved and rejected applicants

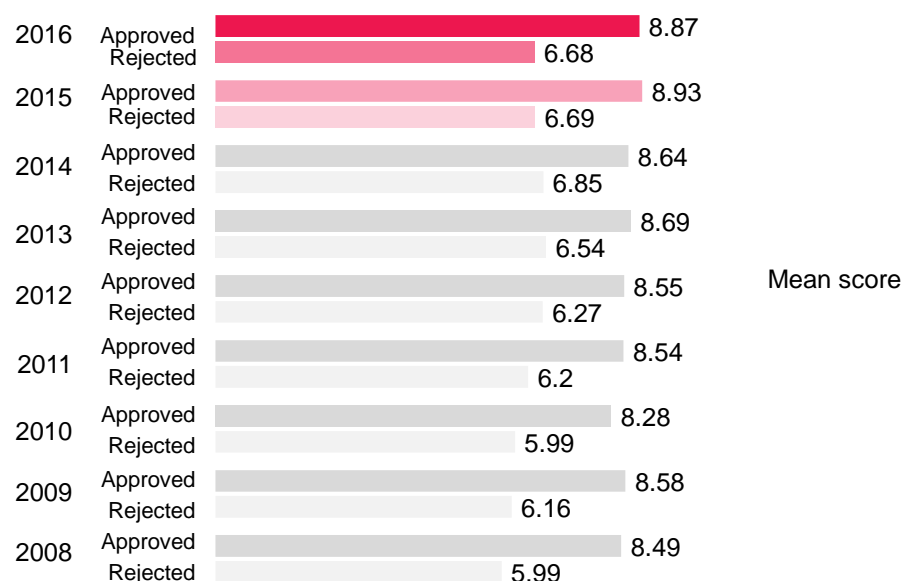
Overall handling of the application process: mean scores approved applicants



Base: All applicants: 2008 (631), 2009 (601), 2010 (544), 2011 (450), 2012 (675), 2013 (1308), 2014 (1748), 2015 (507), 2016 (1600)



Overall handling of the application process: mean scores approved applicants



Base: All applicants: 2008 (631), 2009 (601), 2010 (544), 2011 (450), 2012 (675), 2013 (1308), 2014 (1748), 2015 (507), 2016 (1600)



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Advocacy

High ratings of the overall handling of the application translate into strong advocacy, 86% very/fairly likely to recommend the HLF to another organisation, a slight drop on the 90% that stated this in 2015.

The vast majority of successful Applicants (96%) and around 7 in 10 unsuccessful Applicants (71%) stated they would be likely to recommend the HLF to another organisation. This compares to 97% and 78% in 2015, suggesting that the overall drop in recommendation is driven by unsuccessful applicants. 6% of Applicants (2% of accepted; 13% of rejected) would be unlikely to recommend HLF following the application.

Further HLF grant applications

88% of Applicants would consider applying to the HLF for a grant in the future. Less than 1 in 10 rejected Applicants would *not* apply for a grant with the HLF again.

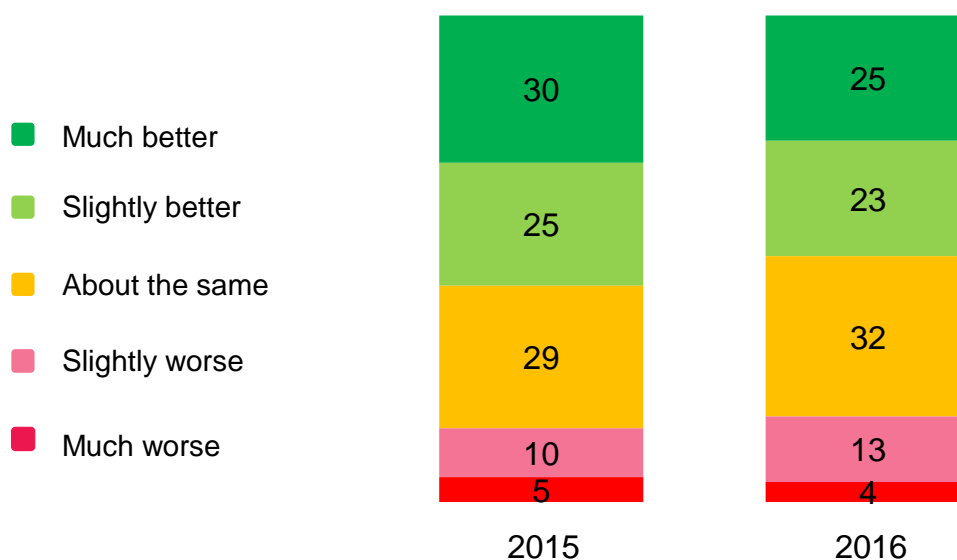
Other grant providers

Around 4 in 5 applicants (81%) had applied for a grant elsewhere at some point in the previous 5 years. Almost half of these applicants (47%) felt that the experience with HLF was better than with other organisations, significantly more than the 17% that felt the experience was worse. Around a third (32%) felt that the experience was about the same.

'Grants for places of worship' showed a high propensity of stating that the experience of applying for a grant with HLF was worse than with another organisation, 27% saying so.

Chart showing the HLF application experience compared to other providers

Application experience vs. other providers (%)



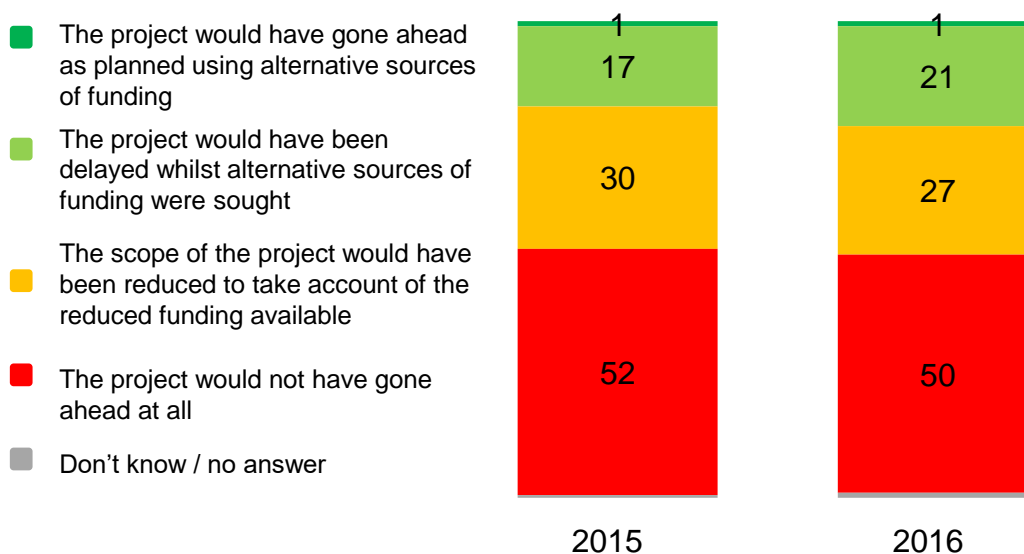
Base: All applicants who have applied for a grant with another organisation in the previous 5 years (1294 in 2016, 405 in 2015, 1362 in 2014)

The importance of HLF funding – approved applicants

98% of approved Applicants stated their project would not have gone ahead as planned had HLF funding not been available. Half (50%) stated their project would not have gone ahead at all, around a quarter (27%) that the scope of their project would have been reduced and a fifth (21%) that their project would have been delayed whilst alternative sources of funding were sought. Only 1% of projects would have gone ahead as planned.

Chart showing applicant actions in the event of not receiving HLF funding

Actions in the event of no HLF funding being available (%)

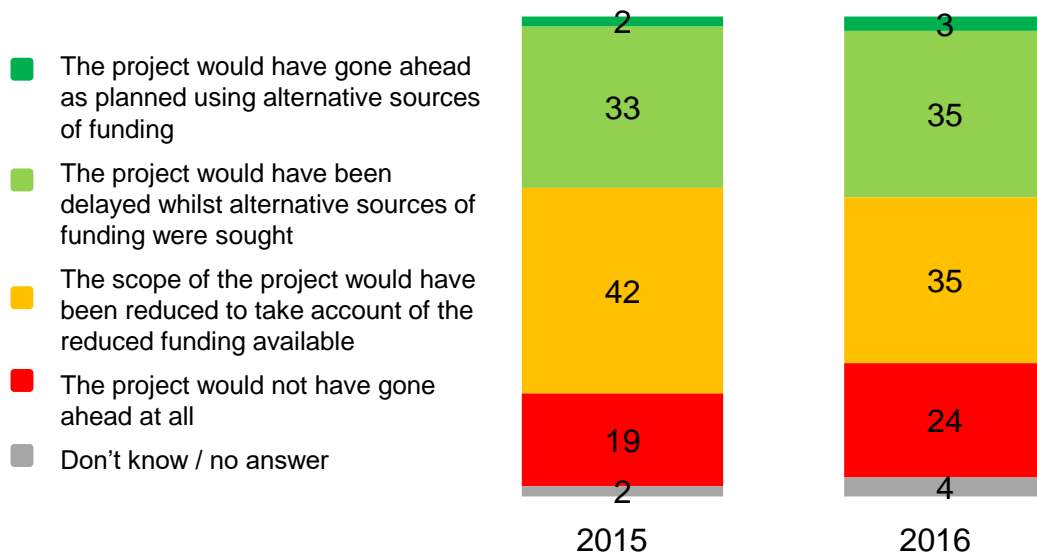


Base: All single and second round decision applicants whose applications were approved (912 in 2016, 292 in 2015, 794 in 2014)

Approved Applicants were asked whether their project would have gone ahead had the HLF required greater partnership funding. For 94%, the project would not have gone ahead as planned. Amongst these, around a quarter (24%) stated that their project would not have gone ahead at all or that the scope of their project would have been reduced (35%). A further 35% stated that their project would have been delayed whilst alternative sources of funding were sought. A minority of 3% stated the project would have gone ahead as planned using alternative sources of funding.

Chart showing applicant actions in the event of needing more partnership funding

Actions in the event of a need for greater partnership funding (%)



Base: All single and second round decision applicants whose applications were approved (912 in 2016, 292 in 2015, 794 in 2014)

The pre-application process

Researching the HLF

Single and first-round decision Applicants were asked a series of questions about the pre-application process. Consistent with 2015, around a third (35%) first learned about the HLF through the work their organisation carries out. Around 1 in 6 (17%) did so through word of mouth highlighting the positive impact of Applicants' strong recommendation levels. Around 1 in 8 Applicants (12%) first learned about HLF through the HLF website

Chart showing how first and single round applicants first learned about HLF

Source through which applicants first learned about HLF (%)

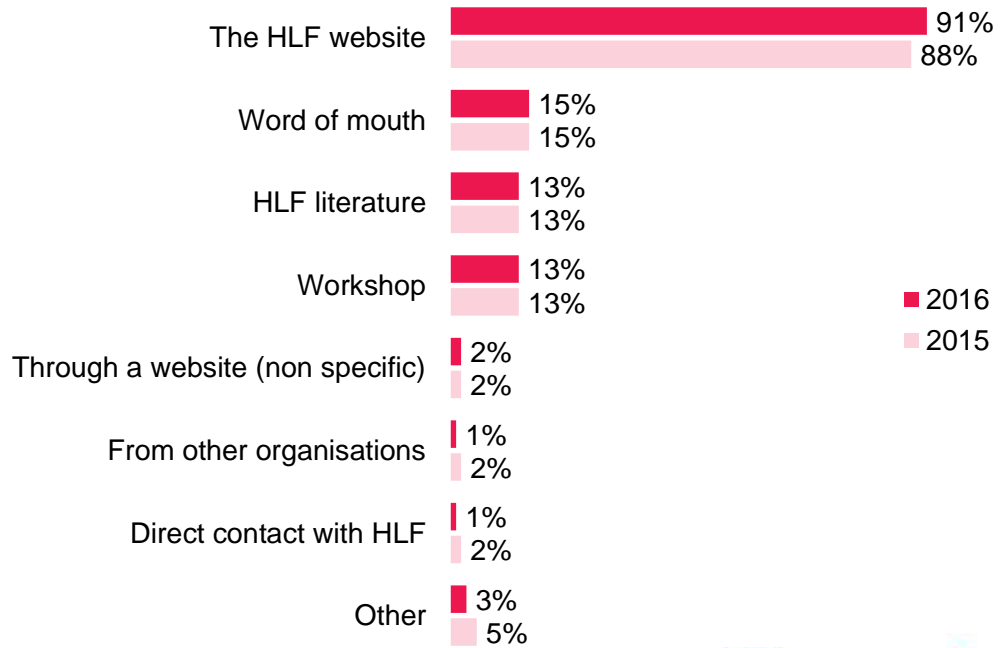


Base: All single-round and first-round applicants (1420 in 2016, 447 in 2015, 1615 in 2014)

Although less important when first finding out about HLF, the HLF website was the main source of information about HLF Grant schemes, 91% of single and first-round Applicants consulting it at some point pre-application.

Chart showing how applicants found out information about HLF Grant schemes

Source through which applicants found out information about HLF Grant schemes (%)



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants (1420 in 2016, 447 in 2015, 1615 in 2014)



Contact with HLF at the pre-application stage

93% of single and first round Applicants had contact with HLF staff before making their application, compared to 94% in 2015. Also consistent with 2015, email and telephone correspondence were the most common modes of contact.

There was a slight increase in single and first-round Applicants that had contact via a formal meeting/grant surgery (37% in 2016 compared with 34% in 2015). Informal contact at an event organised by HLF remains constant at 10%. On average, Applicants had 4.15 different types of contact with HLF.

Chart showing modes of contact with HLF pre-application

Modes of contact with HLF pre-application (%)



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants (1420 in 2016, 447 in 2015, 1615 in 2014)

Pre-application contact with HLF staff

BDRC Continental's work for other heritage grant providers demonstrates the importance of staff in providing a positive application experience. Often, an application may be difficult to complete but the strong support of staff generally leads to positive ratings and strong advocacy.

Consistent with 2015, of those that did speak to HLF staff during the pre-application period, 90% rated them very/fairly helpful; 66% describing them as 'very helpful'. 97% of accepted Applicants and 81% of rejected Applicants rated staff as helpful.

Ratings of specific elements of the application process

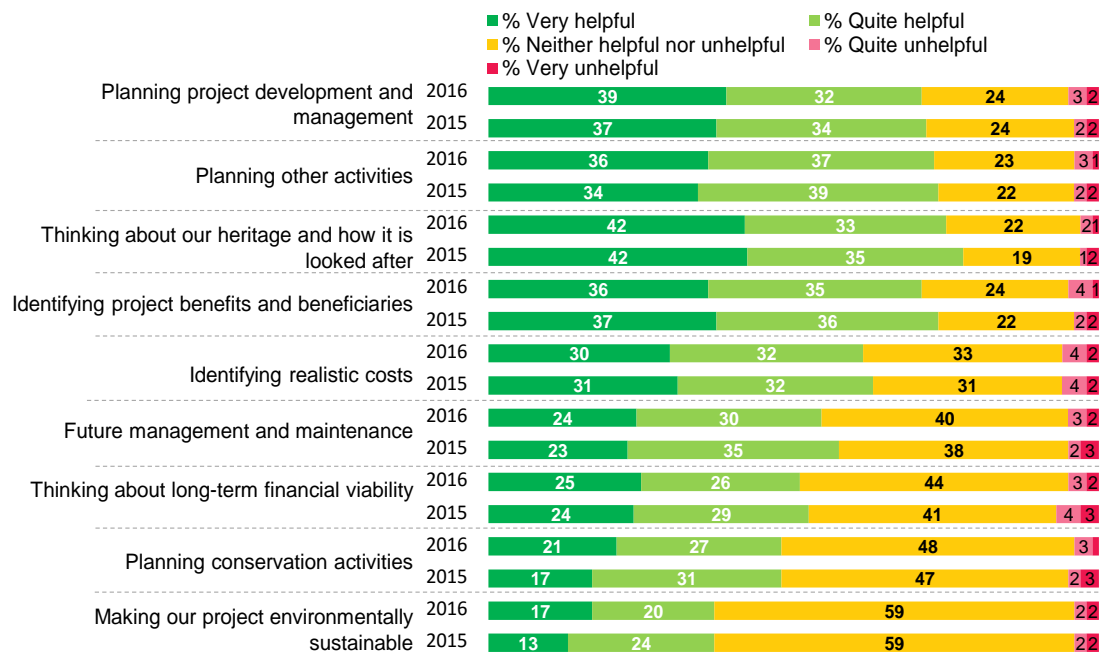
Single and first-round Applicants were asked to rate specific elements of the application process. For the purpose of comparison to 2015, 'don't know' responses have been removed with results reweighted.

HLF was rated 'helpful' on the majority of aspects around the application process. Particularly high 'helpful' ratings were given for HLF's aid in 'thinking about heritage and how it is looked after' (75% rating very/fairly helpful), 'planning other activities' (73%), 'identifying project benefits and beneficiaries' (71%) and 'planning project development and management' (71%).

A small minority rated HLF as 'unhelpful' for any aspects of the application, although some areas received high proportions of 'neither helpful nor unhelpful' responses. 59% rated HLF 'neither helpful nor unhelpful' for 'making our project environmentally sustainable', 48% for 'planning conservation activities' and 44% for 'thinking about long-term financial viability'. These ratings can be due to lack of relevance to individual projects, strong applicant expertise in these areas or minimal input from HLF.

Chart showing ratings of HLF staff on specific aspects of pre-application

Ratings of HLF help on specific aspects of the application (%)



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants who had contact with HLF staff (1315 in 2016, 422 in 2015, 1406 in 2014)

Percentages of less than 1% not shown on the chart for clarity



The importance of HLF help

Around 1 in 7 (14%) of single and first-round Applicants stated that it is unlikely that they would have submitted an application for funding without HLF help.

Although the majority (77%) indicated they would have submitted an application without HLF help, 4 in 5 (80%) stated that the advice they received from HLF helped them to produce an improved application, 93% amongst approved and 63% amongst rejected Applicants.

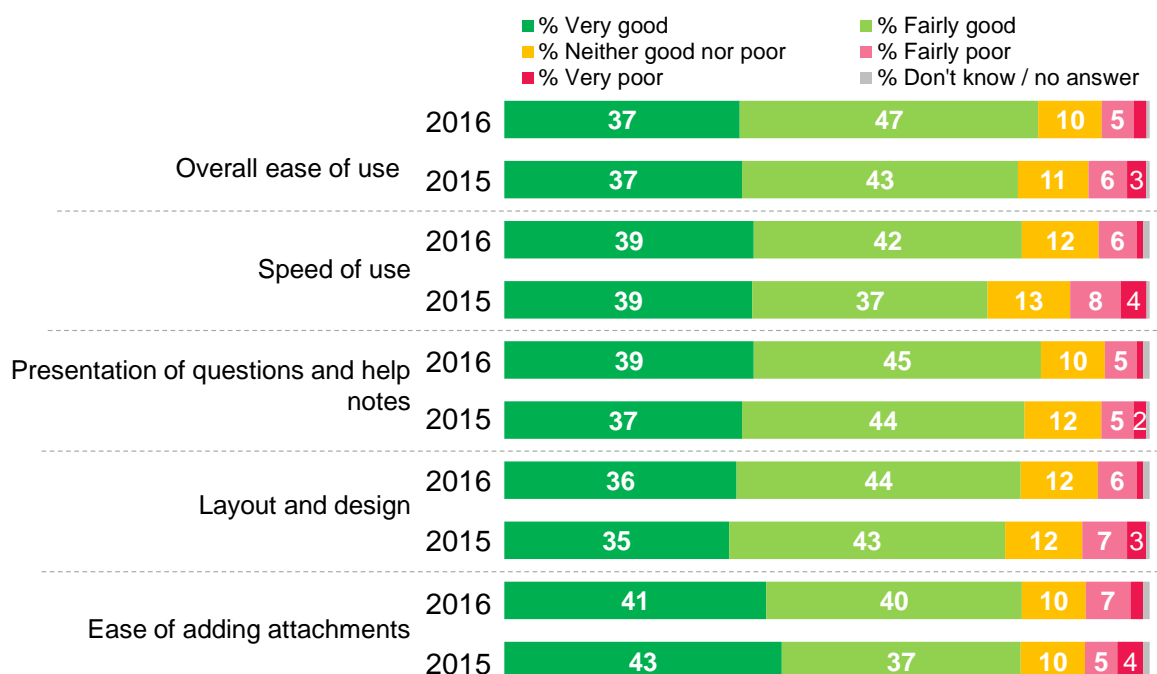
The application process

Online applications

Almost all single and first-round Applicants (99%) submitted their application online. Ratings of the process are consistent with 2015, the vast majority giving 'very/fairly' good ratings for 'overall ease of use' (84%), 'speed of use' (81%), 'presentation of questions and help notes' (84%), 'layout and design' (80%) and 'ease of adding attachments' (81%). 'Ease of adding attachments' was most likely to receive negative feedback, 8% rating the process 'very/fairly poor'.

Chart showing ratings of the online application system

Ratings of the online application system (%)



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants who submitted an online application (1405 in 2016, 438 in 2015, 1569 in 2014)

Percentages of less than 2% not shown on the chart for readability



Improving the online process

First and single-round Applicants that applied for their grant online were asked to suggest ways that it could be improved in future. All suggestions were written in an open text box and no prompts were provided.

Over a quarter (28%) stated that they could not think of any improvements. Of those that made suggestions, 'making the process shorter/faster' was the most common, 34% stating this. A number of added functionality options were suggested, in particular the ability to save the application before submitting it (by 23%). 'Better online guidance notes' were suggested by 1 in 5 (21%).

Table showing what would have improved the online application process

What would have improved the online application for you? (Top 15 suggestions)	%
Making it shorter/faster	34%
Saving the application before submitting it	23%
Better online guidance notes	21%
Better/ easier to read	14%
Improve the finance/ budget section	3%
Making it easier to send attachments	2%
To be able to see more of what I enter (can only read 2 lines of text at a time)	2%
Make the questions clearer	1%
Allow editing of answers/ copy and pasting text	1%
Make it more user friendly	1%
More space to write answers	1%
Allow text formatting	1%
Warnings on character/word limit restrictions	1%
Make the application compatible with other systems	1%
Can't think if anything/ nothing would have improved it	28%

Base: All single and first round Applicants who submitted an online application (1569)

The HLF website

The majority of single and first round Applicants were positive about the ease with which they were able to find information on the HLF website to make their application, 80% stating it was 'very/fairly easy'. It is worth noting that only 25% described the process as 'very easy' (55% stating it was just 'fairly easy') suggesting that there is room for improvement in this area.

Guidance notes

Single and first-round Applicants were asked about their recall and use of HLF guidance notes to help them with their application. In line with previous years, the vast majority (97%) recall consulting HLF guidance notes, around half (49%) recalling the exact notes they consulted. The most commonly recalled guidance notes were the 'application guidance for the programme you were applying to' (67%), followed by 'activity plan guidance' (40%), 'evaluation guidance' (39%) and community participation (35%).

Guidance notes (Top 15)	All Applicants who can recall using guidance notes %
The application guidance for the programme you were applying to	67%
Activity plan guidance	40%
Evaluation guidance	39%
Community participation	35%
Volunteering	34%
How to involve young people in heritage projects	26%
Digital technology in heritage projects	26%
Oral History	22%
Management and maintenance plan guidance	21%
Project business plan guidance	20%
Training	17%
Audience development	14%
Learning guidance	13%
Interpretation guidance	13%
Conservation plan guidance	10%
Don't know / no answer	8%

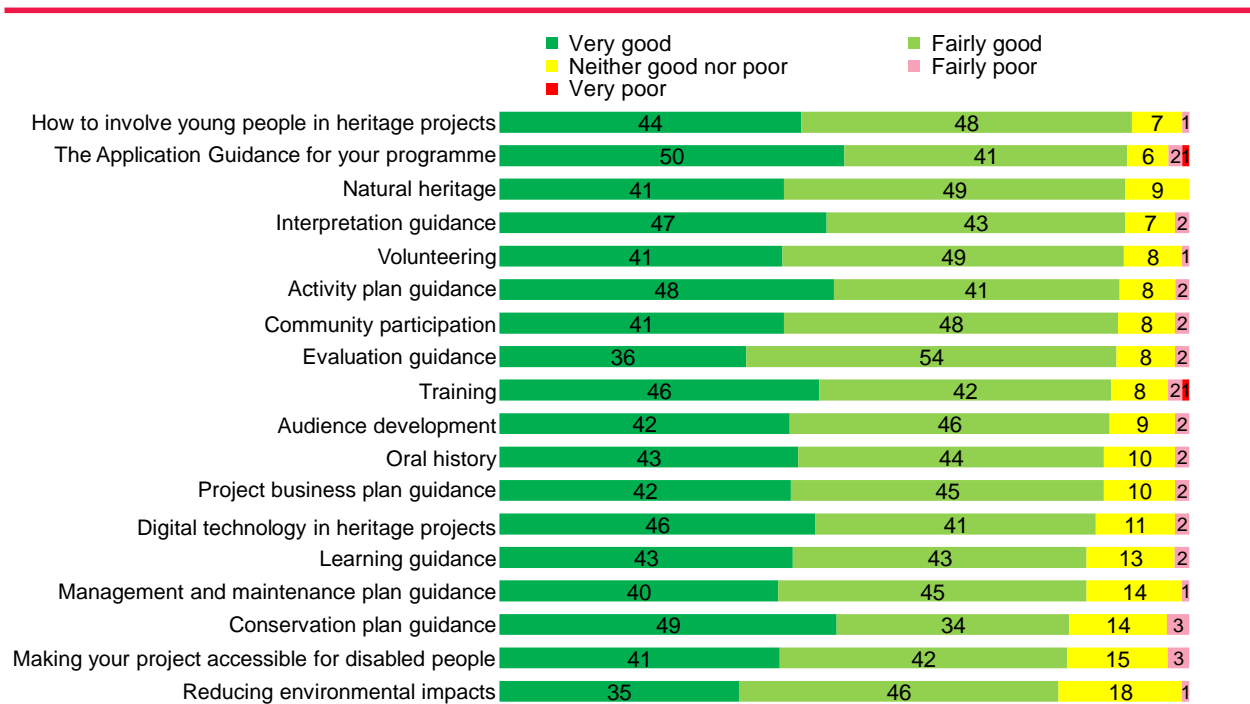
All Single stage and 1st round Applicants who recall looking at guidance notes (1023)

Despite 1 in 5 single and first-round applicants suggesting ‘better online guidance notes’ as an area of improvement (table 7.2.1), the majority of guidance notes were rated positively. The guidance notes with the lowest ‘very/fairly good’ rating were ‘reducing environmental impacts’, ‘making your project accessible for disabled people’ and ‘conservation plan guidance’.

The lower ratings on reducing environmental impact and conservation plan guidance correspond with lower ratings of HLF help in these areas (chart 7.1.1). This suggests that improved guidance notes may improve perceptions of HLF support in these areas. That said the correlation may simply reinforce the fact that these areas were of relatively reduced relevance or importance to projects.

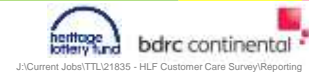
Chart showing ratings of guidance notes

Ratings of guidance notes (%)



Base: All group 1 & 2 applicants SP4 using guidance notes (various)

Showing all with base sizes of 50 and over



The application form

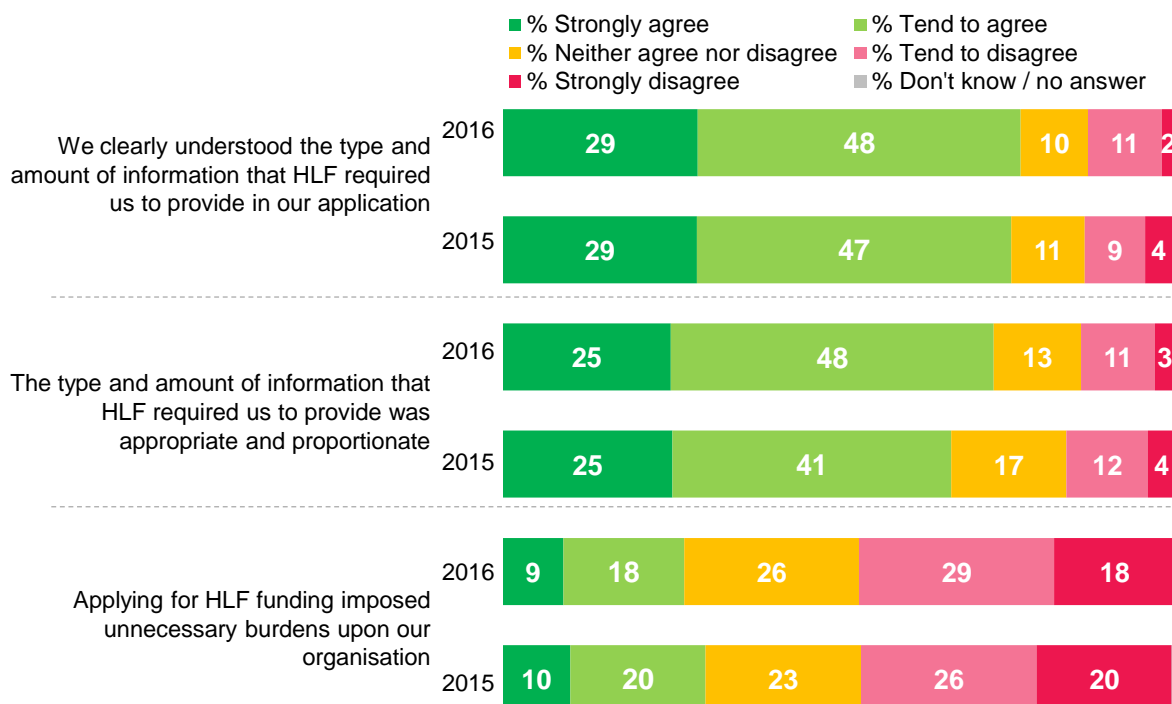
Consistent with 2015, the majority of single and first-round Applicants (76%) agreed that they clearly understood the type and amount of information they were required to provide in their application. A similar proportion (73%) agreed that the information was 'appropriate and proportionate'.

Almost half of Applicants (47%) disagreed that 'applying for HLF funding imposed unnecessary burdens upon our organisation', a further 26% neither agreeing nor disagreeing. Around 1 in 4 of Applicants (27%) agreed the funding imposed unnecessary burdens, a similar proportion to 2015. 'Grants for places of worship' were most likely to agree with this statement (44% doing so). This finding suggests that more could be done to support these projects, particularly given that they also have a lower than average proportion of rejected applications.

Qualitative work conducted by BDRC Continental amongst Applicants for other grant distributors highlights that the application process is often perceived to be difficult/a burden. A common challenge is the strain the process puts on organisations' internal administrative procedures, which are often not developed enough to meet the needs of the rigorous application procedure. Although the majority of organisations appreciate the necessity of these procedures, a regular complaint is that they were not made aware of the strain the application process would put on their organisations at the pre-application stage. 'Grants for places of worship' were also more likely to agree that applying for a grant with HLF was worse than the experience of applying for a grant elsewhere, suggesting that for this audience, raising awareness of the application process is even more important.

Chart showing ratings of the application form

Rating the application form (%)



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants (1420 in 2016, 447 in 2015, 1615 in 2014)

Percentages of less than 2% not shown on the chart for clarity



Producing applications

For the majority of single and first round applications (83%), more than one person was involved in preparation. Over half of the projects (53%) involved more than 3 people. 39% of Applicants sought help from an outside organisation.

Assessment

Contact with HLF

54% of single and first round Applicants were contacted by their Grants Officer while their application was being considered, a similar proportion to the 53% that were contacted in 2014. 57% of accepted applications and 50% of rejected applications were contacted by their grants officer.

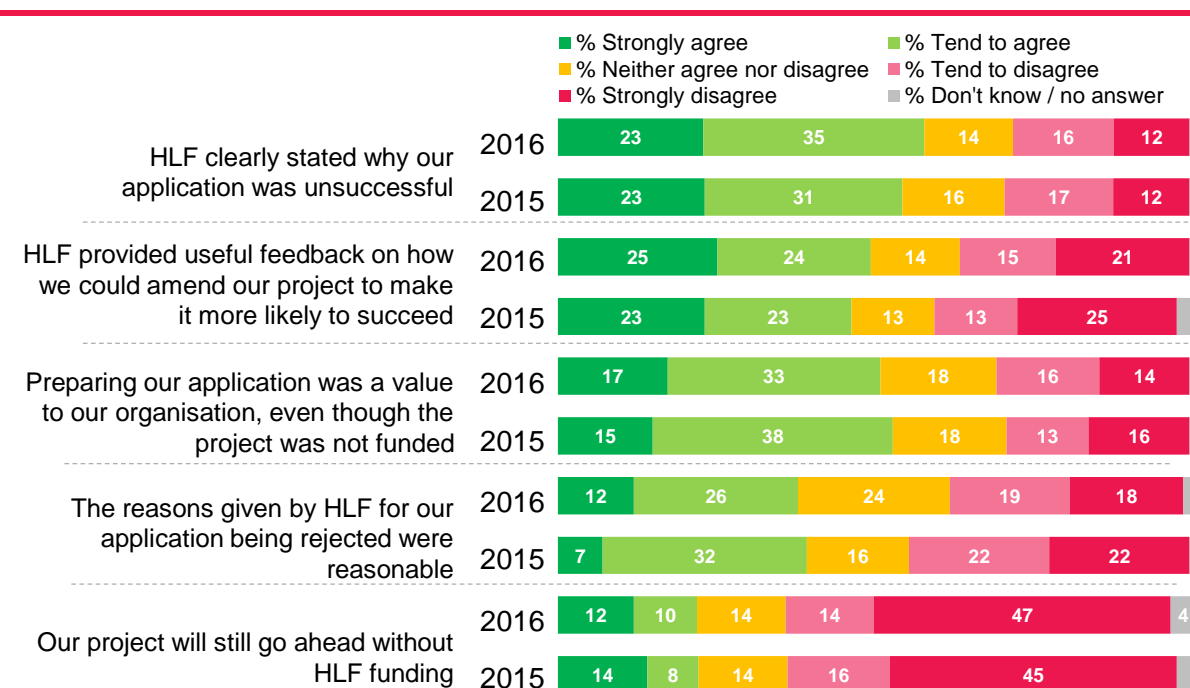
Rejected applicant feedback

As in 2015, the majority of rejected single and first round Applicants were positive about the application experience, although a notable minority provided negative ratings. 58% agreed that HLF clearly stated why their application was unsuccessful (28% disagreed); 49% agreed that 'HLF provided useful feedback on how we could amend our project' (36% disagreed); and 50% agreed that 'preparing the application was a value to the organisation...' (30% disagreed). 38% of rejected Applicants agreed that the reasons given for the application being rejected were reasonable; 37% disagreed.

Around 1 in 5 rejected first and single round Applicants (22%) stated that their project will still go ahead without HLF finding.

Chart showing rejected applicant feedback

Rejected applicant feedback (%)



Base: All single-round and first-round rejected applicants (537 in 2016, 140 in 2015, 665 in 2014)

Percentages of less than 4% not shown on the chart for clarity



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Project development – 2nd round Applicants

Headline findings

The mean score for the overall handling of the process given by second round Applicants was 8.38/10, compared to 8.47/10 in 2015. The vast majority of second round Applicants (96%) stated they are likely to recommend HLF to another organisation.

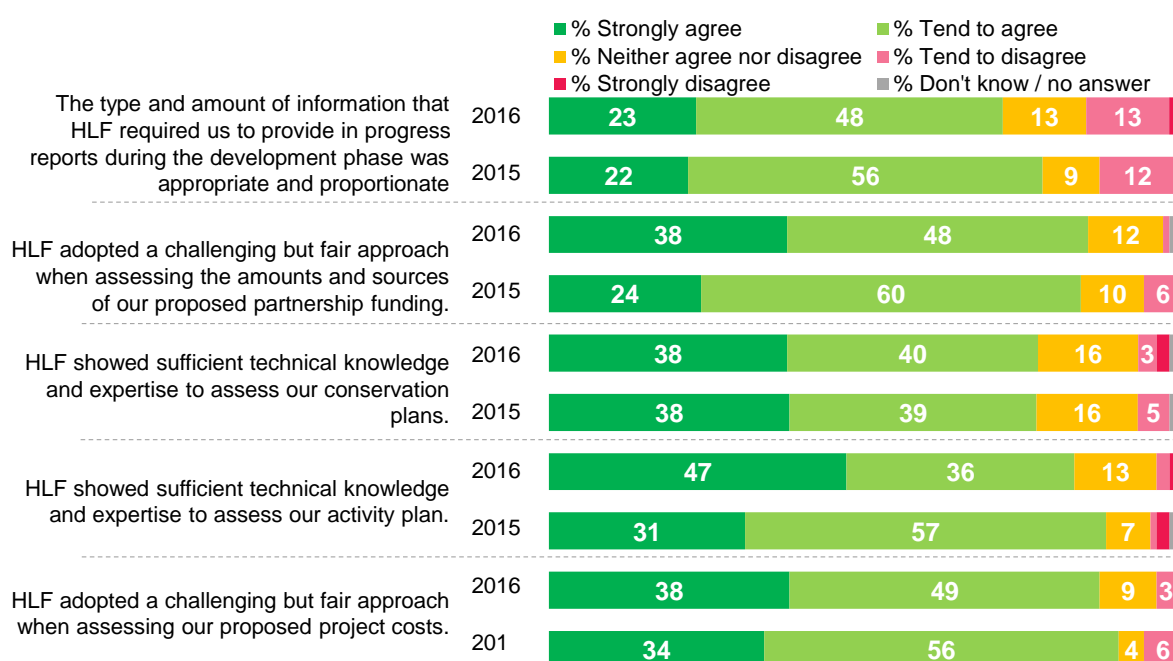
HLF staff support

Around two-thirds of second round Applicants (64%) had an HLF–appointed mentor for the development phase of their project. As in 2015, of those that did, the vast majority (93%) agreed that their mentor was helpful – 72% very helpful. Grants staff were also regarded positively in the development phase of their project, 90% of second round projects rating them as helpful.

Second round Applicants were generally positive about how HLF handled the application process. However, there was some negativity around the type and amount of information HLF required them to provide in progress reports, only 23% strongly agreeing and 27% disagreeing that it was ‘appropriate and proportionate’.

Chart showing second round decision applicant feedback

Second round decision applicant feedback (%)



Base: All second round decision applicants (220 in 2016, 60 in 2015, 133* in 2014)

Percentages of 2% or less not shown on this chart for readability

Second round Applicants - process summary

The vast majority of second round Applicants (97%) submitted their application online. Those that did were generally positive about the process, 67% describing the overall ease of use as 'very/fairly good', similar to the 68% that stated this in 2015.

Opinions of the online application layout and design have improved, 65% rating it as 'very/fairly' good, compared to 54% in 2015, as has 'the presentation of questions and help notes' (81% compared to 78% in 2015).

Ratings of 'speed of use' have dropped since 2015 (from 72% to 67%) as has 'ease of adding attachments' (from 62% to 60%). As with first-round projects, ease of adding attachments was most likely to receive negative feedback, around 1 in 5 (22%) describing the process as poor. When asked to suggest improvements to the online application, 'making it easier to send attachments' was the most common mention, 19% suggesting this.

Other suggested areas of improvement included:

- Making it easier/ user friendly (14%)
- Improve the finance budget section/make figures easier to enter (13%)
- Making the quotations clearer (10%)
- Reducing repetitive/ irrelevant questions (7%)
- Better online guidance notes (6%)

66% of second round Applicants rated the ease with which they were able to find information on the HLF website to help their application as 'very/fairly easy,' a 6 percentage point rise on 2015 when 60% gave this rating.

97% of second round Applicants recall looking at guidance notes when they were preparing their application. 63% recall the specific guidance notes they read or used during the application.

Guidance notes (Top 10 recalled)	2016	2015
Activity plan guidance	85%	84%
The application guidance for the programme you were applying to	73%	83%
Management and maintenance plan guidance	69%	64%
Evaluation guidance	64%	58%
Volunteering	39%	38%
Community participation	36%	37%
Project business plan guidance	32%	45%
Conservation plan guidance	31%	40%
Interpretation guidance	22%	33%
Audience development	21%	33%
Did not recall any	5%	5%

All second round Applicants who recall looking at guidance notes (2016 n=113; 2015 n=59)

Ratings of the application writing process were generally positive. 73% agreed they clearly understood the type and amount of information required (71% in 2015); 67% that the type of information was appropriate and proportionate (68% in 2015).

Less positively, 32% agreed that applying for HLF funding imposed unnecessary burdens on their organisation, a rise on the 25% that reported this in 2015.

85% of second round Applicants were contacted by a HLF grants officer during their second round assessment, a similar proportion to 2015 (89%). Around 3 in 5 (57%) dealt with just one grant officer during their application, around a third (31%) two grant officers. The vast majority of projects (91%) found the contact with the grants officer ‘very/fairly helpful’.

60% of second round Applicants used professionals from outside their organisation to help prepare their application. The majority used this help for ‘project and cost planning’ (71%) and a notable proportion used it for ‘future management and maintenance planning’ (55%); 45% for activities planning and 42% for conservation planning. There has been some movement since 2015, although due to low base sizes, changes are indicative only.

Reasons for Applicants using professionals outside their organisation to help prepare their application	2016	2015
Project cost planning	71%	77%
Future management and maintenance planning	55%	55%
Activities planning	45%	63%
Conservation planning	42%	57%
Long-term financial viability	22%	44%
Environmental sustainability	10%	28%

All that used a professional from outside their organisation (2016 n=108; 2015 n=43)

Grantee Customer Care Survey

Applicant response and sample breakdown

Survey invites were sent to 1,607 grantees from which 860 responses were received, generating a response rate of 54%.

The online pilot survey conducted in 2015 highlighted that some categories of Grantees are more likely to respond to the survey than others. To ensure the data in this report represents the full applicant population, we have weighted responses by known sample information. The Grantees responses were weighted by the following sample criteria:

- **Grant awarded**
 - Under £100,000, £100,000 to £1,999,999, £2,000,000+
- **Region**
 - East Midlands, West Midlands, North East, London, North West, Wales, Yorkshire and The Humber, South East, South West, Northern Ireland, Scotland, East of England
- **Programme**
 - All our stories, Catalyst Endowments/Small Grants, Collecting Cultures/Landscape Partnership /Local Heritage Initiative/Townscape Heritage Initiative/ Transition Funding, First World War, Grants for places of worship/repair grants for places of worship, Heritage Grants, Your/Our Heritage, Parks/Parks for People, Sharing Heritage, Skills for the Future, Start-Up Grants, Young Roots.

The following tables compare the profile of respondents with the profile of the total sample population.

Grant programme

Grant programme	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
All our stories	3%	3%	3%
Catalyst Endowments	<1%	<1%	<1%
Catalyst small grants	2%	2%	2%
Collecting cultures	<1%	<1%	<1%
First World War	20%	18%	20%
Grants for places of worship	2%	3%	2%
Heritage Grants	7%	6%	7%
Your/Our Heritage	36%	39%	35%
Parks	<1%	0%	0%
Parks for people	1%	<1%	1%
Sharing heritage	16%	16%	16%
Skills for the future	2%	1%	2%
Start-up grants	2%	2%	2%
Townscape Heritage Initiative	1%	<1%	<1%
Transition funding	1%	1%	1%
Young roots	7%	5%	7%
Heritage Enterprise	<1%	0%	0%
Landscape Partnership	<1%	0%	0%
Local Heritage Initiative	<1%	<1%	<1%
Repair grants for places of worship	1%	1%	1%

Organisation type/1

Organisation type	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
Church organisation or other faith-based group	7%	8%	7%
Commercial organisation	<1%	<1%	<1%
Community/voluntary	63%	65%	65%
Local authority	17%	14%	15%
Other public sector	13%	12%	12%
Other	<1%	<1%	<1%

Decision maker

Decision maker	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
Committee	9%	9%	9%
Delegated	86%	88%	86%
Board	5%	3%	5%

Region

Region	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
East Midlands	8%	7%	8%
East of England	9%	10%	9%
London	11%	10%	11%
North East	3%	3%	3%
North West	12%	14%	12%
Northern Ireland	3%	3%	3%
Scotland	10%	11%	10%
South East	12%	12%	12%
South West	9%	9%	9%
Wales	5%	5%	5%
West Midlands	11%	9%	11%
Yorkshire and The Humber	7%	7%	7%

Grant awarded

Grant awarded	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
£99,999 or less	87%	90%	87%
£100,000 - £1,999,999	11%	9%	12%
£2,000,000 - £4,999,999	1%	1%	1%
£5million or more	<1%	<1%	<1%

Heritage Area

Heritage area	Sample proportions	Un-weighted proportions	Weighted proportions
Historic buildings and monuments	14%	14%	13%
Industrial maritime and transport	4%	3%	3%
Intangible heritage	34%	33%	34%
Land and biodiversity	10%	10%	10%
Museums, libraries, archives and collections	15%	17%	17%
Community Heritage	23%	23%	23%

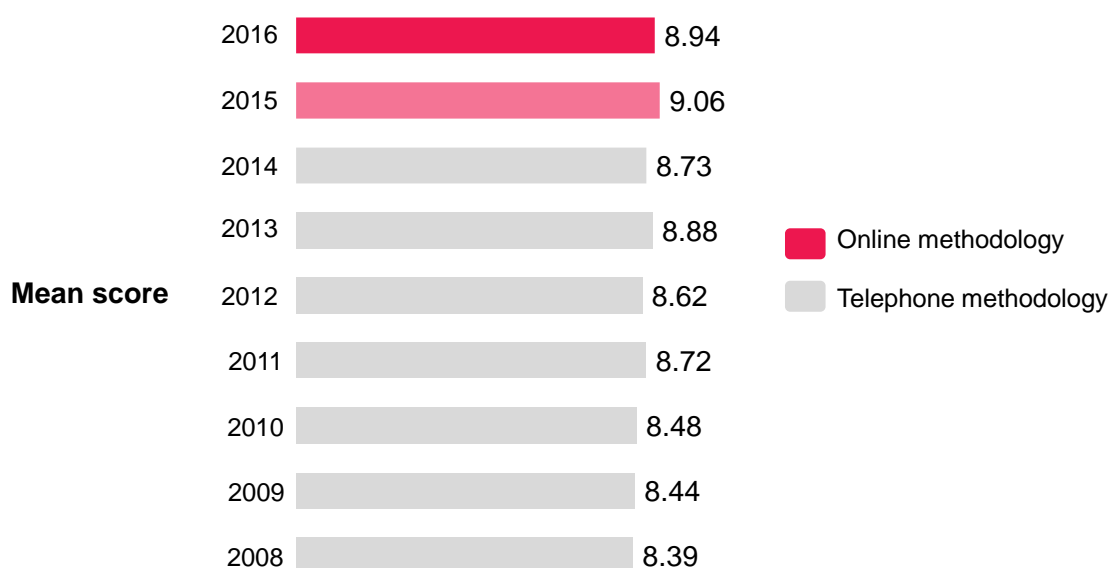
Overall satisfaction

Overall rating

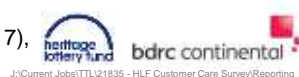
Overall ratings of the service provided by HLF have marginally declined since the same period in 2015, Grantees giving a mean score of 8.94/10, compared to 9.06/10 12 months before.

Chart showing the overall rating of the service provided by HLF

Overall rating of service provided by HLF – Mean Scores



Base: All grantees 2008 (529), 2009 (600), 2010 (599), 2011 (566), 2012 (541), 2013 (417), 2014 (620) 2015 (235) 2016 (860)

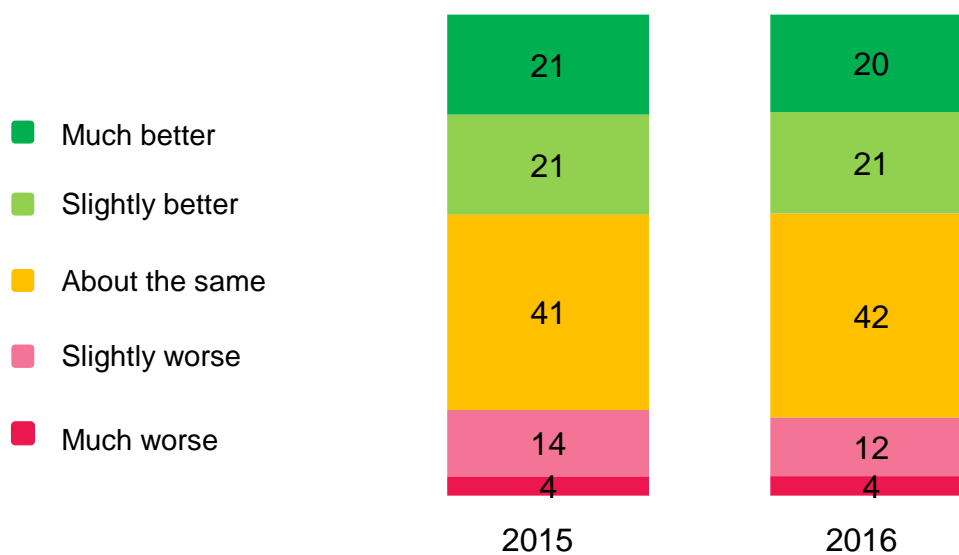


Other grant-providers

As in 2015, around three-quarters of Grantees (77%) had received a grant from another organisation in the past 5 years. 39% stated that the experience with HLF was better and 40% that it was about the same. Only 16% described the experience as worse.

Chart showing comparisons to other grant providers

Comparison to other grant providers (%)



Base: All grantees that had applied for a grant with another provider in the last 5 years 2016 (664), 2015 (174), 2014 (620)

The project lifecycle

Permission to start

The vast majority of Grantees (90%) stated that they received the go-ahead to start their project within the timescale they expected. Only 6% felt that their project was delayed. Of the 53 Grantees whose project was delayed, only 1 in 5 (9) did not feel that the delay was justified.

Contact with Grants Officer

Nearly 9 in 10 (85%) Grantees contacted their Grants Officer while their project was being implemented, a similar proportion to the 86% that did so in 2015. Of those that did, the vast majority (98%) felt that the contact was helpful; 85% *very* helpful.

Nearly half of Grantees (48%) retained the same Grants Officer throughout the course of their project, a lower proportion than in 2015 (57%). 28% experienced one change and 13% more than one change.

Increased changes of Grants Officers tend to correlate with reduced rating of the service provided by HLF. This implies that the slight drop in overall ratings are in part driven by the higher proportion of projects that experienced one or more change of Grants Officer.

Monitoring forms

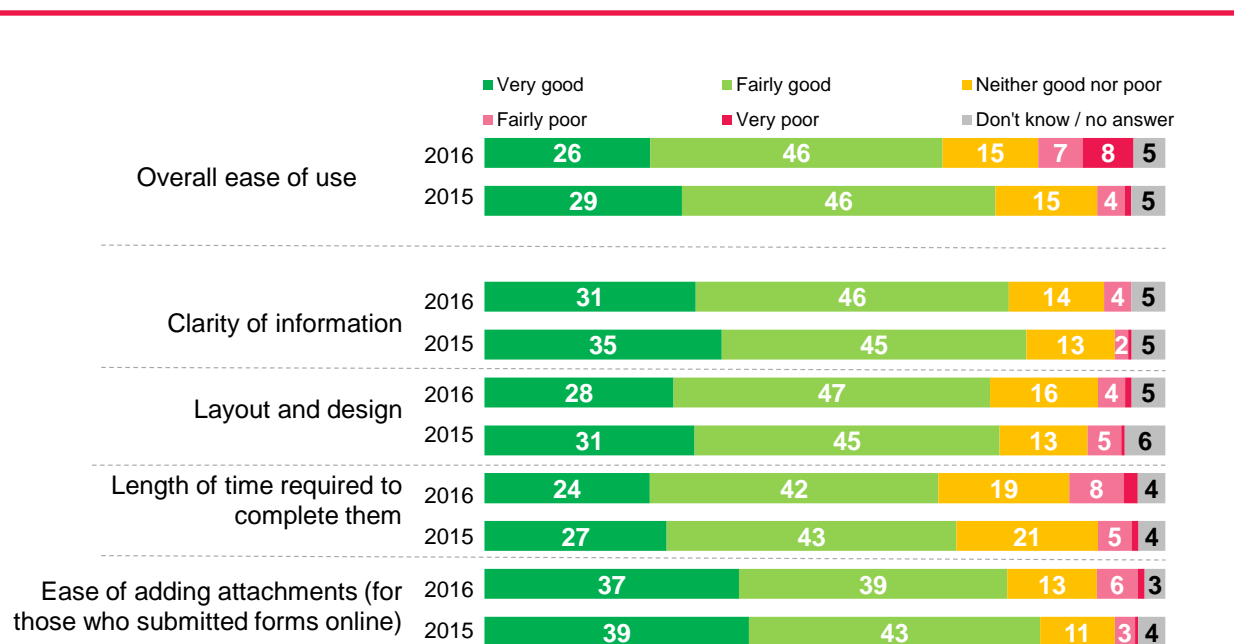
Almost 9 in 10 Grantees (87%) submitted their monitoring form online, a similar proportion to 2015 (91%). Similar to 2015, around 1 in 5 (18%) submitted a hard copy of their monitoring form.

Grantees were positive about the monitoring forms, 72% stating that the overall ease of use was 'very/fairly good', slightly higher than the 70% that gave this rating in 2015. There were small drops in ratings across a number of other areas including:

- 77% that rated the 'clarity of information' as very/fairly good (80% in 2015)
- 74% 'layout and design' (76% in 2015)
- 67% 'length of time required to complete them' (70% in 2014)
- 76% 'ease of adding attachment' (82% in 2014).

Chart showing the ratings of monitoring forms

Rating the monitoring forms (%)



Base: All grantees (860 in 2016, 235 in 2015, 620 in 2014)
Percentages of 2% and under not shown on the chart for clarity



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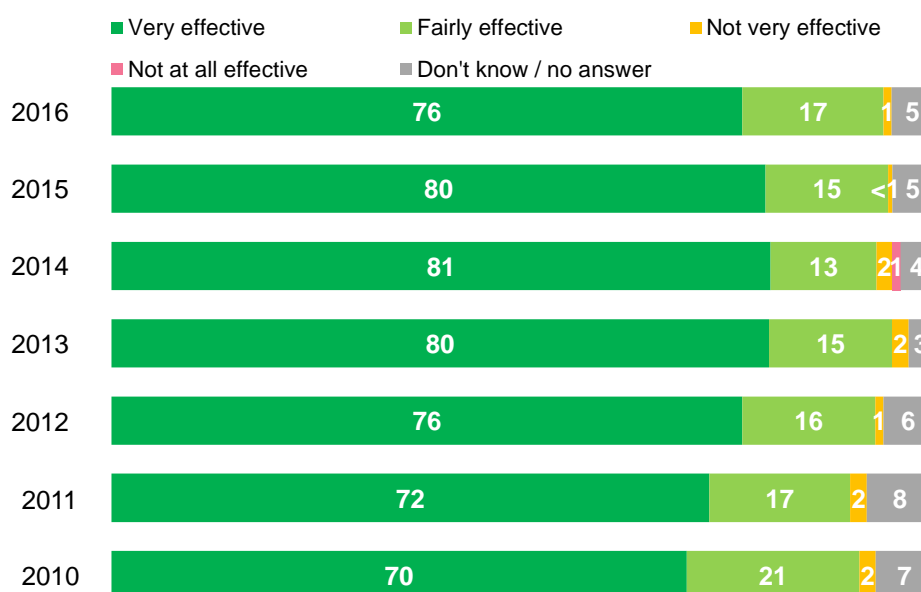
As in 2015, around 8 in 10 Grantees (81%) agreed that the type and amount of information asked for in the monitoring documents was appropriate and proportionate.

Payment drawdown

It is HLF’s policy to make all grant payments within 15 working days of receiving all relevant supporting information. Consistent with previous years, the majority (93%) of Grantees stated that the HLF was ‘very/fairly effective’ in making payments within this specified time, 76% stating they were ‘very effective’.

Chart showing grant drawdown effectiveness

Grant drawdown effectiveness (%)



Base: All grantees (860 in 2016, 235 in 2015, 620 in 2014, 417 in 2013, 541 in 2012, 556 in 2011, 599 in 2010)



External Monitors

According to HLF records, 35 of the surveyed Grantees were appointed an external monitor following their grant award decision. 31 (87%) confirmed this was the case, 25 (70%) stating they were appointed one monitor and 6 (17%) more than one monitor.

Of the 31 Grantees that stated they had contact with an external monitor, 27 (89%) said contact with them was easy and 29 (93%) that that their monitor was helpful.

HLF Mentors

8% of Grantees had an HLF mentor working with them on their project, similar to the 10% that reported this in 2015. As in 2015, the vast majority found contacting their HLF mentor easy (96%) and helpful (95%).

Project costs and completion dates

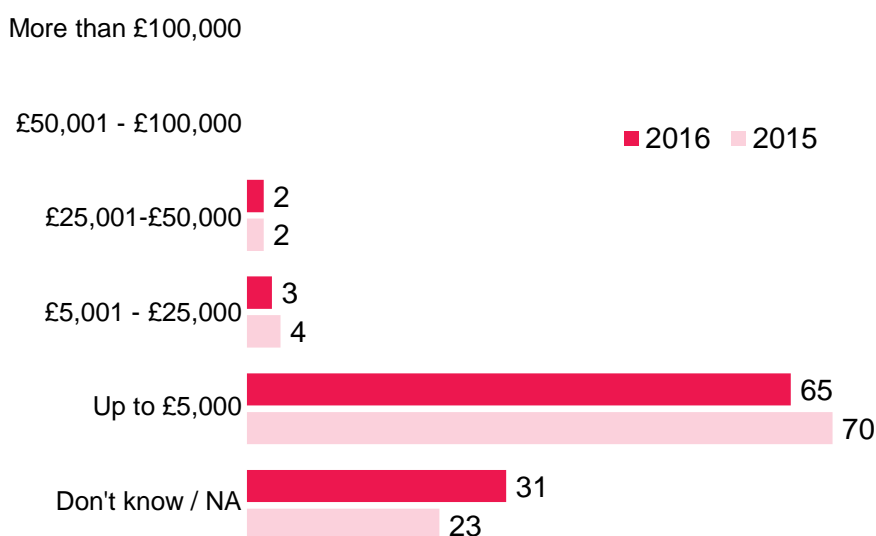
This section presents responses to questions about how well projects met expected project costs and completion dates. Please note that 2015 figures tend to be based on lower base sizes, so comparisons to 2016 should be indicative unless stated. Statistically significant movements are noted in the commentary.

Project costs

1 in 4 Grantees (25%) reported that their project costs increased during the implementation of their project, a slightly lower proportion than in 2015 (29%). The costs increased by no more than £5,000 for two thirds (65%) of these Grantees.

Chart showing project cost increases

Project cost increases (%)

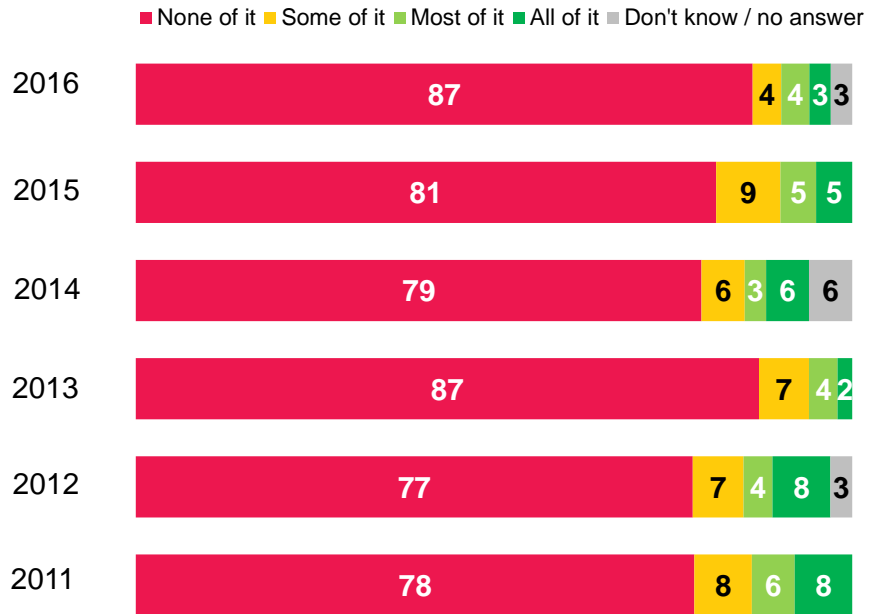


Base: All grantees whose project costs increased during implementation (214 in 2016, 65 in 2015, 131 in 2014)

Of the Grantees that did encounter an increase in project cost, 11% had at least some of their costs met by HLF, an 8 percentage point decrease on 2015 (19%). 87% of Grantees had none of the extra costs covered by HLF, compared to 81% in 2015.

Chart showing additional funding provided by HLF

Additional funding provided by HLF (%)



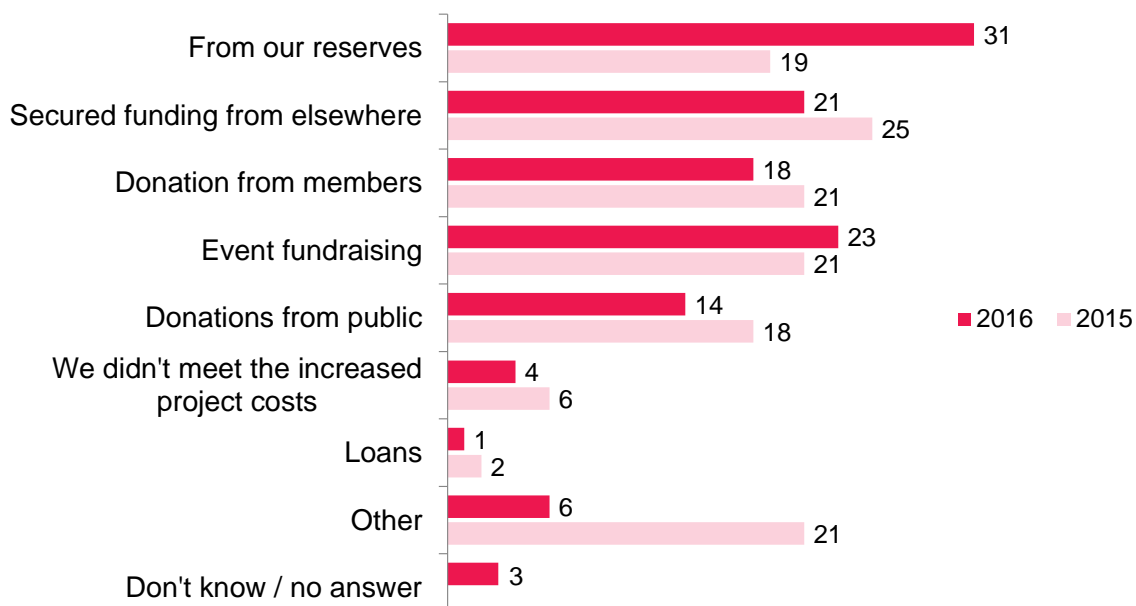
Base: All grantees whose project costs increased during implementation (214 in 2016, 65 in 2015, 131 in 2014, 85 in 2013, 135 in 2012, 144 in 2011)



There has been some year-on-year movement in the sources people used to cover costs not entirely met by HLF. Projects were most likely to have met extra costs via their own reserves, 31% having done so, a significant increase on the 19% that did so in 2015. 21% secured funding from elsewhere, a 4 percentage point drop on 2015. 21% secured funding from elsewhere, a 4 percentage point drop on 2015. Only 4% of Grantees whose increased costs were not entirely covered by HLF were unable to meet them (6% in 2015).

Chart showing how the increased costs were met by projects

Meeting the balance of increased costs not covered by the HLF (%)



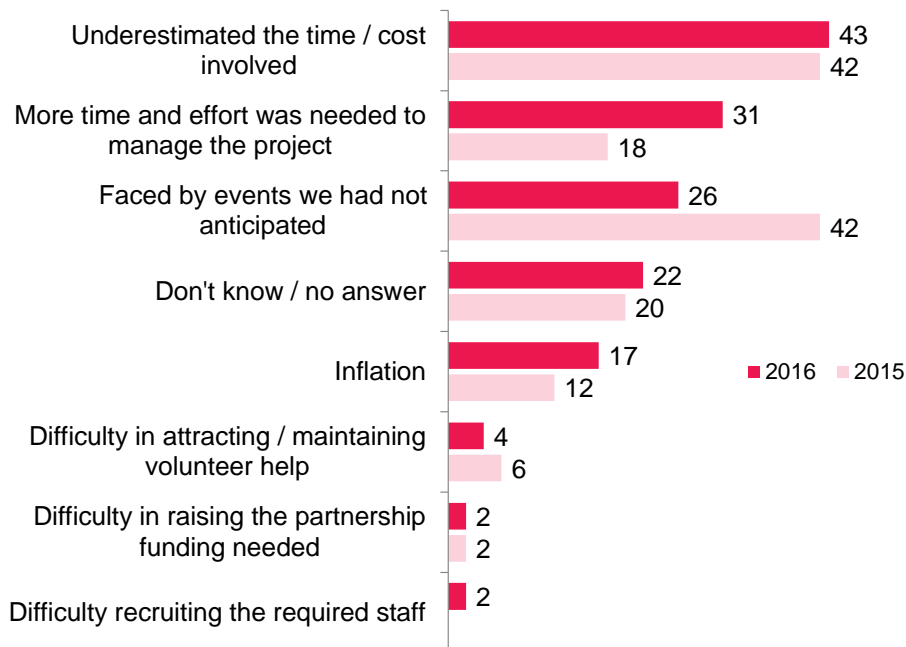
Base: All grantees whose project costs increased during implementation and were not fully paid for by HLF (203 in 2016, 62 in 2015)

As in 2015, ‘underestimating the time/cost involved’ (43%) was the most common reason given for project cost increases. ‘More time and effort was needed to manage the project’ was the next most common reason given (31%) a significant 13 percentage point increase on 2015. ‘Faced by events we had not anticipated’ (26%) was the third most common reason given for project cost increases.

Of the 53 projects whose project costs increased, the most common reasons given were ‘costs generally increased from what was anticipated’ (30%), ‘Additional work required’ (28%) and ‘change in personnel’ (17%).

Chart showing the reasons for project cost increases

Reasons for encountering project cost increases (%)



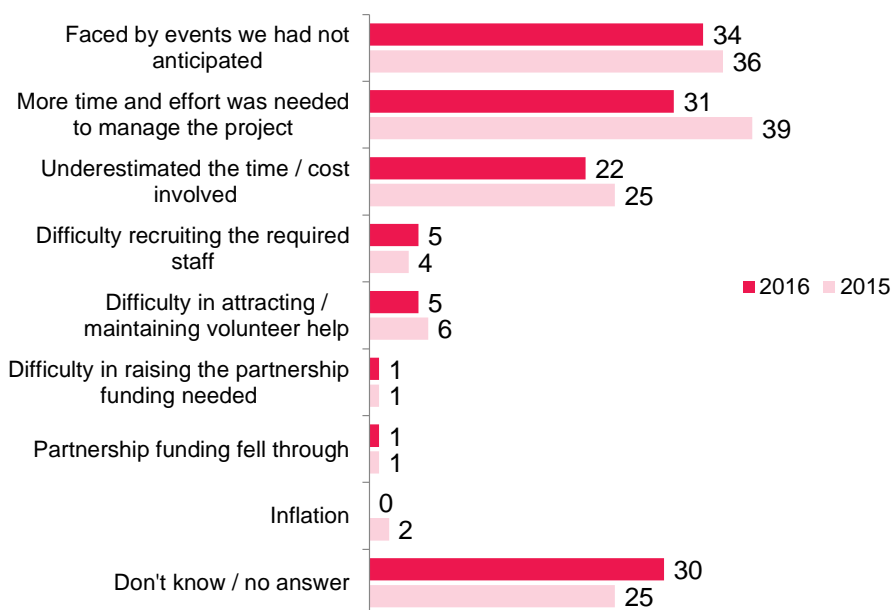
Base: All grantees whose project costs increased during implementation and were not fully paid for by HLF (203 in 2016, 62 in 2015)

Completion dates

Just over half of Grantees (54%) reported that the completion date of their project was extended or delayed, 10 percentage points more than in 2015 (44%). ‘Faced by events we had not anticipated (34%), ‘more time and effort needed to manage the project’ (31%) and ‘underestimating the time/cost involved’ (22%) were the most common reasons cited.

Chart showing reasons projects encountered delays/extensions

Reasons for encountering delays / extensions to project completion dates (%)



Base: All grantees whose project completion date was extended /delayed (471 in 2016, 100 in 2015)



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Amongst projects that cited events they had not anticipated a delay the most common drivers of this were ‘availability of staff’ (36%), ‘additional work needed’ (21%) and ‘Just needed more time to finish/make sure everything was done’ (16%).

HLF Support

HLF support

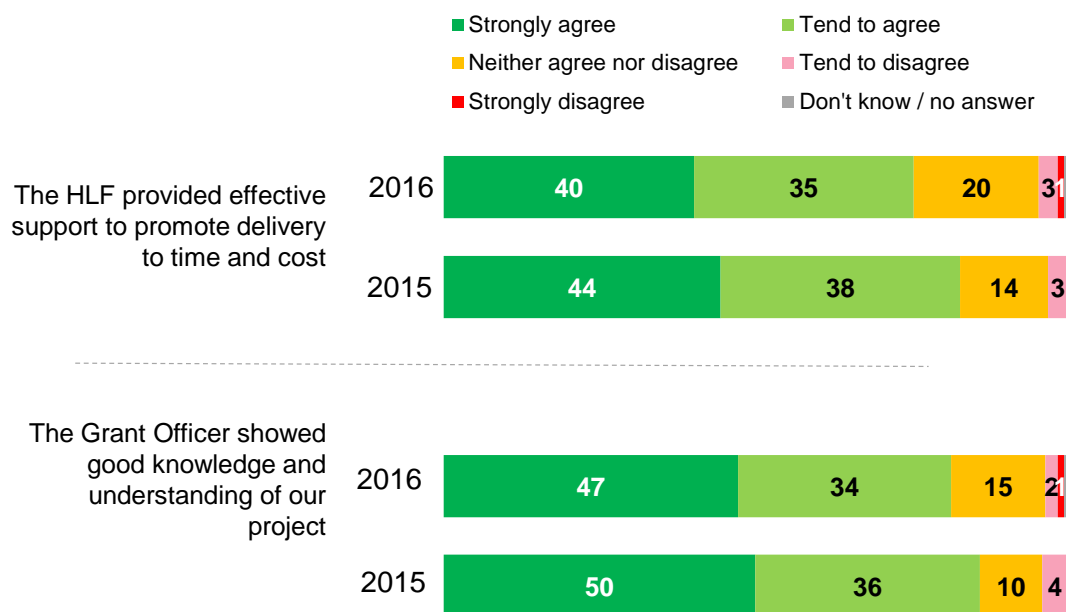
BDRC Continental research amongst other grant providers underlines the importance of effective support for Grantees throughout the process. There is an expectation of a challenging process, but sufficient support tends to drive positive overall ratings.

Three quarters of Grantees (75%) agreed that HLF provided effective support to promote the delivery of their project to time and cost, a significant drop on the 82% that gave this rating in 2015. 81% agreed that their Grant Officer showed good knowledge and understanding of their project, a drop on 86% in 2015.

Could reduced ratings of HLF support be driving lower overall satisfaction?

Chart showing ratings of HLF support

HLF Support (%)



Base: All grantees (860 in 2016, 235 in 2015)

Other HLF-funded projects

BDRC Continental's research elsewhere also demonstrates the importance Grantees attach to communicating with other similar projects when developing their project. Networking is seen as a platform for idea generation and sharing best practice, which can improve project outputs and take the onus off grant providers.

A third of Grantees (33%) spoke to other people involved in HLF-funded projects, higher than the 27% of people that did so in 2015. 91% of Grantees that spoke to another HLF-funded project described the contact as beneficial, 50% highly beneficial. The contact was most likely to be beneficial in providing shared experiences (73%), sharing best practice (53%), providing someone to discuss things with (47%) and providing support (21%)

The suggestion to speak to other HLF-funded projects was made by HLF in 28% of cases where contact was made. Given the benefit Grantees report from this contact, could HLF be more proactive in connecting organisations with others?

Post project evaluation

The majority of Grantees agreed that the evaluation HLF requested on project completion was appropriate in terms of depth and scope (81%) and that the exercise was useful to them (83%). Ratings of the evaluation's usefulness have dropped significantly since 2015 (89%).

Similar to previous years, just over two thirds of Grantees (68%) shared at least 'a little' of their evaluation results with others. 25% shared 'a lot' of their evaluation results, a drop on 2015 (when 32% did so)

Appendix 1 – Statistical reliability

Guide to statistical reliability

The Customer Care research is based on a sample of respondents rather than the entire population. Therefore the percentage results contained in this report are subject to sampling tolerances. These tolerances vary according to the number of respondents and the percentage response they gave. For example, for a question where 50% of the respondents in a sample of 1600 respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that this result would not vary more than plus or minus 2.4 percentage points, from the result that would have been obtained if we did a census of the entire population (using the same procedures). Indications of the approximate sampling tolerances that may apply in this report are given in the table below.

Size of sample or sub-group on which survey result is based	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70%±	50%±
All Applicants (1600)	1.5	2.2	2.4
All approved Applicants (1063)	1.8	2.8	3.0
All rejected Applicants (537)	2.5	3.9	4.2
First and single round Applicants (1420)	1.6	2.4	2.6
Second round Applicants (180)	4.4	6.7	7.3
All Grantees (860)	2.0	3.1	3.3

The following table is a guide to the sampling tolerances applicable to comparisons between sub-groups.

Size of sample or sub-group on which survey result is based	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
Approved (1063) vs. rejected Applicants (537)	3.11	4.76	5.19
All Applicants 2016 (1600) vs. All Applicants 2015 (507)	3.00	4.58	4.99
All First and Single Round Applicants 2016 (1420) vs. All First and Single Round Applicants 2015 (447)	3.19	4.87	5.31
All Second Round Applicants 2016 (180) vs. All Second Round Applicants 2015 (60)	8.77	13.39	14.61
Grantees 2016 (860) vs. Grantees 2015 (235)	4.33	6.61	7.21

Appendix 2 – Switching methodologies

Introduction

From 2016 onwards, the Applicants and Grantees Customer Care survey switched from a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) methodology to an online interviewing methodology. The online methodology is more cost-effective for HLF and provides Applicants and Grantees with the opportunity to fill out the survey at a time of their convenience. This added convenience and reduced time pressure leads to greater granularity of responses, providing HLF with a better understanding of the service they provide.

Challenges to switching methodologies

A key challenge when migrating methodology is maintaining comparability. Typically, 'hard to reach' or 'unengaged' respondents (such as rejected applicants) are less likely to respond to an online survey than a telephone survey. A further challenge is the different practical experiences which subsequently lead to differing responses. Respondents tend to be more positive to a person (as on the telephone) than when they are responding online. They also have more time to reflect on their answers online than on the telephone. Unavoidable question design differences can also drive different results. The differences prompted by methodology pose a challenge when comparing results to previous years. This makes it difficult to understand whether movements in ratings are due to changes in HLF service delivery or the change in research design, rendering trend data indicative at best.

To overcome these challenges we ran a 'pilot online survey' alongside 2015 'summer wave' of Applicants and Grantees telephone interviews. By conducting the surveys at exactly the same time, with identically composed samples, we aimed to accurately gauge the main methodological differences in responses. The next sub-section explains the pilot methodology findings in more detail.

Pilot survey methodology and samples

It was essential that the conditions between surveys were as similar as possible. Both were conducted in June 2015 assessing:

- Applicants that had received a decision between October 2014 – March 2015
- Grantees whose project had completed between October 2014 – March 2015

The samples for Applicants and Grantees were split into two separate sub-samples with identical representation according to:

- Programme type
- Region
- Grant awarded
- Decision type (Applicants only)

Surveys were sent out to all online respondents on the 1st June 2015 with a deadline to complete at midnight 30th June. Online respondents were given 2 x reminders to complete the survey. Telephone respondents were called within the same time-frame, each receiving up to three telephone calls from the interviewing team. The response rates for the online surveys were **59%** (Applicants) and **65%** (Grantees). The telephone survey response rate was **70%**. It is worth noting that although response rates were lower in the online methodology, the 'cost per complete' is significantly lower. As a consequence the online methodology allows HLF to interview larger samples, and potentially to generate larger response numbers overall.

Although samples were split equally, a key challenge was ensuring responses by sub-group reflected this. Positively, response rates were broadly similar across Applicants and Grantees surveys. As expected, one key area of difference was the response rates amongst 'approved' and 'rejected' Applicants respondents; rejected applicants significantly less likely to respond to the survey. This is a key area of differentiation, approved applicants significantly more likely to be positive about the application process. Their 'over-representation' in the online survey would therefore 'falsely' uplift satisfaction with HLF. To overcome this challenge, the online data was weighted by decision type to match the telephone survey results.

The tables below illustrate the unweighted breakdown of responses to online and telephone methodologies by sub-group:

Grant programme

Grant programme	Applicants telephone	Applicants online	Grantees telephone	Grantees online
Heritage Grants	17%	16%	9%	7%
Young Roots	6%	5%	8%	11%
Landscape Partnership	2%	1%	<1%	%%
Parks for People	1%	1%	0%	1%
THI	1%	1%	<1%	0%
Grants for Places of Worship	16%	18%	1%	<1%
Heritage Enterprise	1%	1%	--	--
Our Heritage	27%	28%	29%	29%
Start-up Grants	3%	3%	2%	1%
Transition funding	2%	1%	--	--
First World War	11%	12%	18%	19%
Sharing Heritage	14%	13%	19%	20%
Catalyst Small Grants	--	--	6%	5%
Skills for the future	--	--	<1%	<1%

Region

Region	Applicants telephone	Applicants online	Grantees telephone	Grantees online
East Midlands	7%	7%	5%	6%
East of England	8%	10%	10%	10%
London	10%	11%	11%	14%
North East	6%	6%	7%	8%
North West	13%	11%	10%	9%
Northern Ireland	3%	4%	1%	1%
Scotland	9%	9%	8%	8%
South East	10%	10%	14%	12%
South West	9%	10%	15%	15%
Wales	8%	7%	4%	3%
West Midlands	8%	8%	8%	7%
Yorkshire and Humberside	8%	7%	7%	6%

Grant awarded

Grant awarded	Applicants telephone	Applicants online	Grantees telephone	Grantees online
£10,000 or less	21%	23%	47%	48%
£10,001 - £99,999	23%	26%	42%	44%
£100,000 - £1,999,999	18%	20%	10%	7%
£2,000,000 - £4,999,999	2%	2%	<1%	1%
£5million or more	0%	0%	1%	0%
Unsuccessful	36%	28%	--	--

Decision (Applicants only)

Decision	Applicants telephone	Applicants online	Grantees telephone	Grantees online
Approved	64%	72%	--	--
Rejected	36%	28%	--	--

Survey outcomes

Having applied each of the stages outlined above, we can be confident that any differences in online and telephone survey results are driven by methodological (as opposed to circumstantial) factors. This section discusses the responses to the questionnaire in each survey, highlighting how and why differences emerged. The types of differences that occurred in the survey are best explained by separating question types into the following categories:

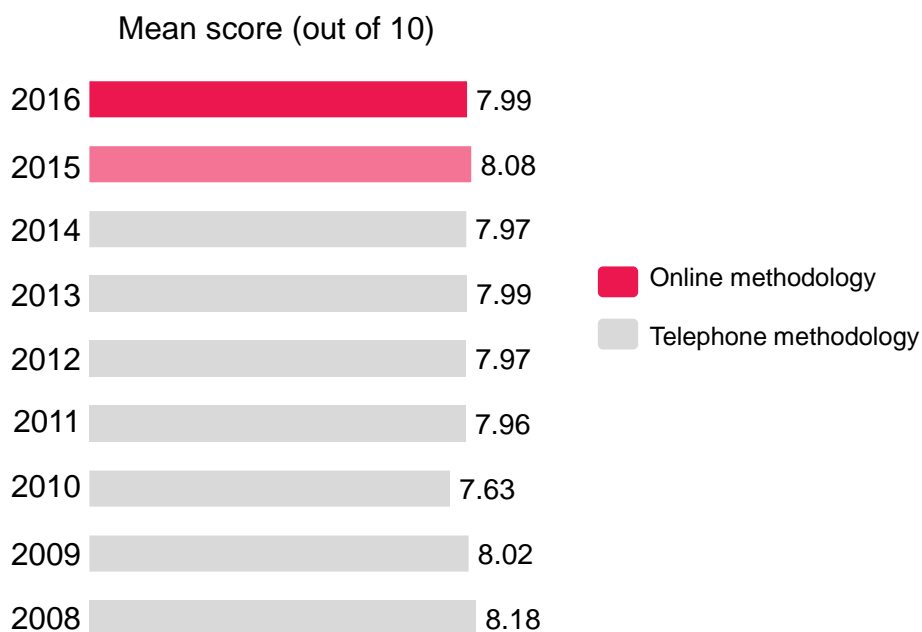
- **Stand-alone ratings:** questions asked of respondents individually e.g. overall satisfaction
- **Battery ratings:** questions where respondents were asked to rate a series of statements in one question
- **Information-based:** questions that required respondents to recall specific information. For example, marketing prompts or information on guidance notes.

Stand-alone ratings

The pilot survey demonstrated that stand-alone ratings were higher amongst respondents to the online survey. As illustrated below, this was the case amongst both Applicants and Grantees.

Chart showing overall handling of the application process by methodology type

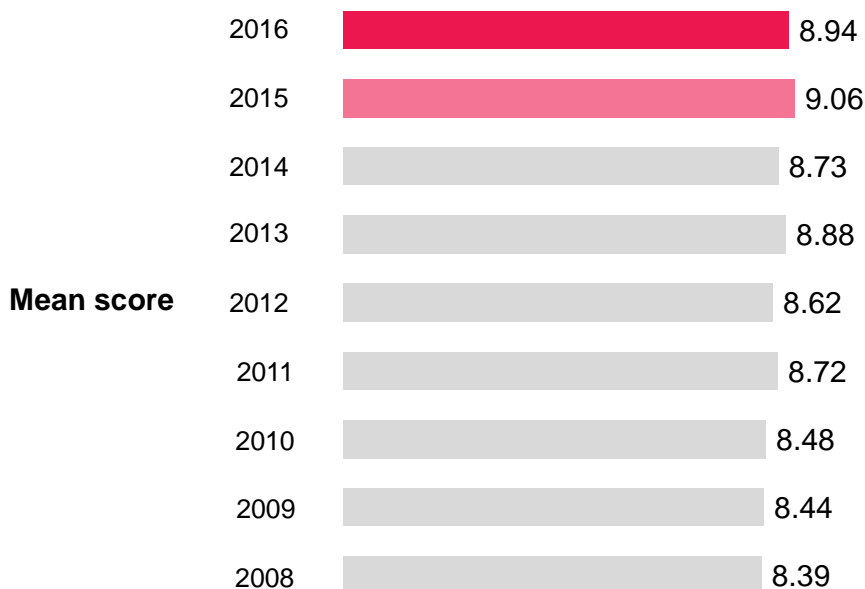
Overall handling of the application process (mean score)



Base: All applicants: 2007 (643), 2008 (631), 2009 (601), 2010 (544), 2011 (450), 2012 (675), 2013 (1308), 2014 (1748), 2015(507), 2016 (1600)



Overall rating of service provided by HLF – Mean Scores



Base: All grantees 2008 (529), 2009 (600), 2010 (599), 2011 (566), 2012 (541), 2013 (417), 2014 (620) 2015 (235) 2016 (860)



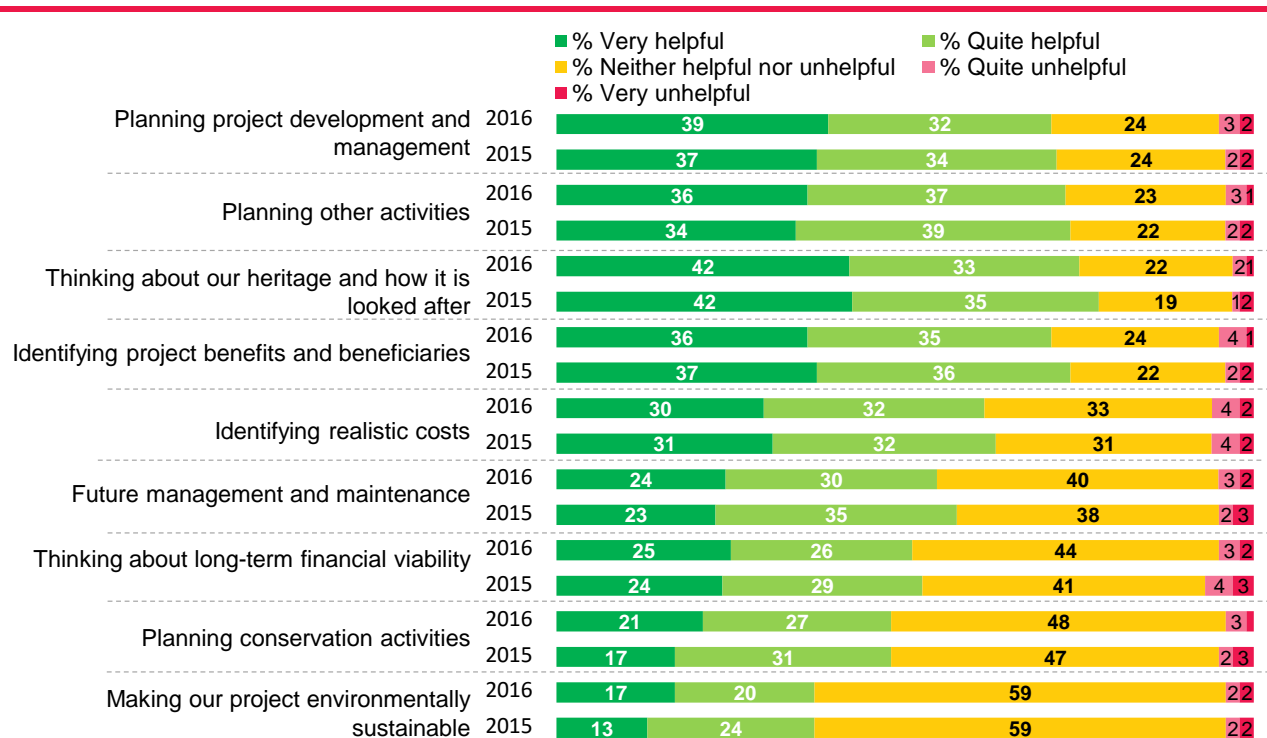
The reasons for this bias are not immediately obvious, although we can hypothesise that respondents are less likely to provide responses at the extremes when asked orally (as on the telephone) than when there is a visual prompt (as there is online). This is particularly the case when asked to give a rating out of 10, where people naturally gravitate around the number 7. Online illustrations of numbers at the extremes (such as ‘very satisfied’ written above the 10), remove this bias, and can create a tendency to respond more positively.

Battery ratings questions

There are a number of instances throughout the Applicants and Grantees surveys where respondents are asked to rate a series of related statements consecutively. As illustrated in the charts below, in each of these cases, online respondents were less likely than telephone respondents to give positive results at the extremes e.g. ‘very helpful’ or ‘strongly agree’.

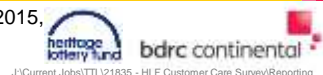
Chart showing ratings of HLF help by methodology

Ratings of HLF help on specific aspects of the application (%)



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants who had contact with HLF staff (1315 in 2016, 422 in 2015, 1406 in 2014)

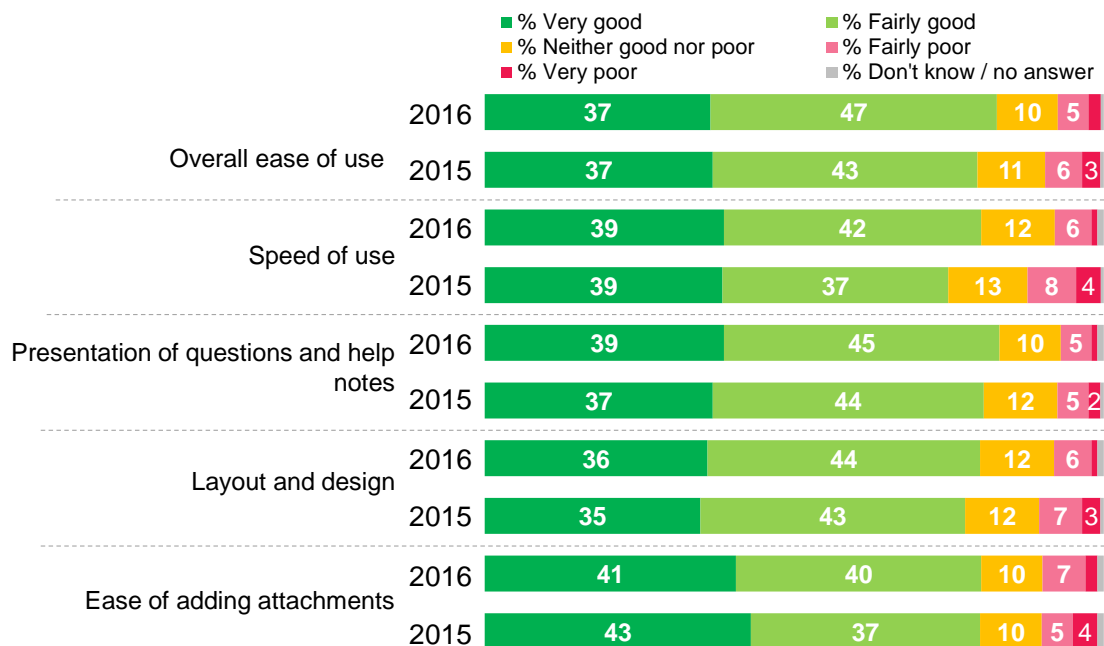
Percentages of less than 1% not shown on the chart for clarity



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Charts showing ratings of application and monitoring forms by methodology type

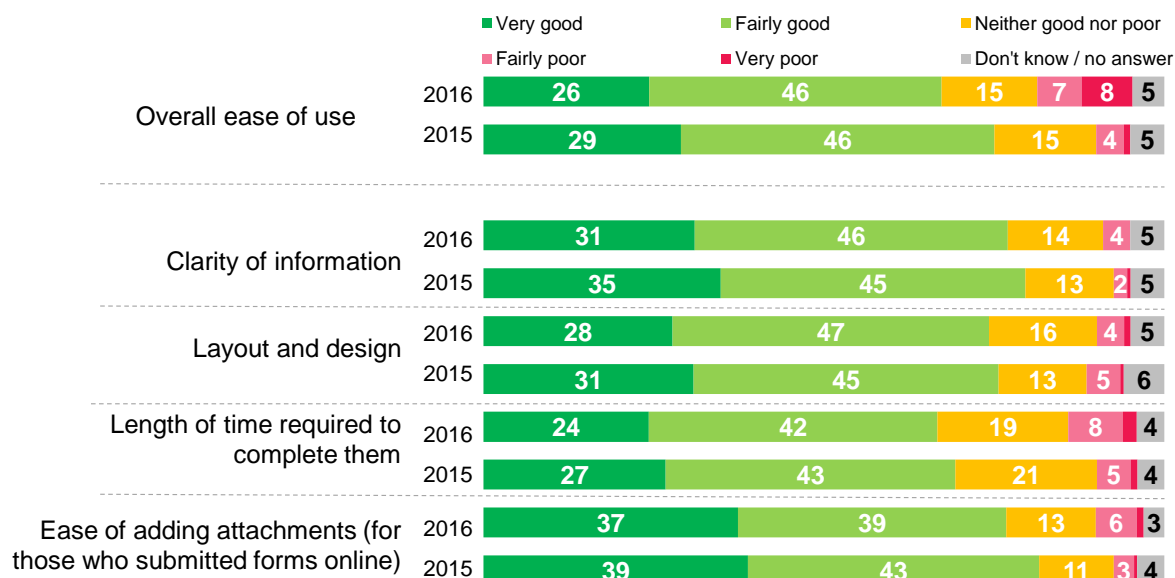
Ratings of the online application system (%)



Base: All single-round and first-round applicants who submitted an online application (1405 in 2016, 438 in 2015, 1569 in 2014)
 Percentages of less than 2% not shown on the chart for readability



Rating the monitoring forms (%)



Base: All grantees (860 in 2016, 235 in 2015, 620 in 2014)
 Percentages of 2% and under not shown on the chart for clarity



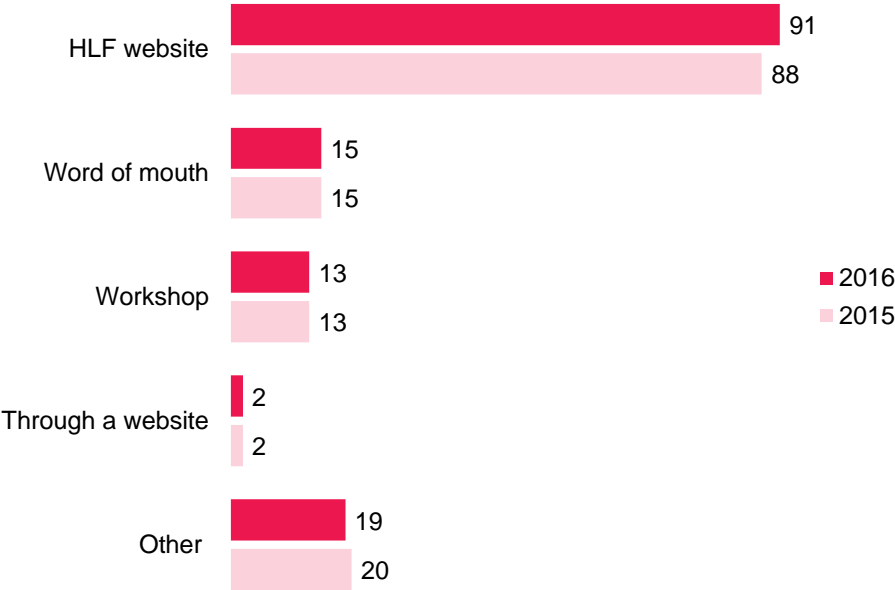
The 'battery ratings' variation is driven by a number of factors. Online surveys present each statement on one screen, meaning that respondents read each statement before they start their ratings. As a result of this, they are able to 'trade-off' statement ratings. They may be less likely to 'strongly agree' with a rating of a statement if they feel more strongly about any of the next statements. The grid presentation can also generate 'choice paralysis' where the trade-off becomes so challenging that the respondent automatically 'downgrades' ratings away from the extremes, settling for ratings that are in the direction of their user experience, or that are indifferent e.g. 'neither agree nor disagree'. In telephone surveys respondents are asked to rate statements individually. Respondents have no prior knowledge of upcoming statements, and are unable to 'trade-off' their responses. They are less likely to be impacted by choice-paralysis for the same reason. Online survey design does allow respondents to rate statements individually, but the continual need to click through questions can lead to respondent fatigue. It can be argued that the grid/trade-off presentation provides a more 'real-life' way of rating.

Information-based questions

Applicant and Grantee online surveys both produced significantly higher recall of questions that required respondents to recall specific information about the process with HLF. As illustrated below, this was the case across a range of questions, particularly those that referred to marketing and guidance notes.

Chart showing information sources by methodology type

How did you find information about HLF grant schemes? (%)



Base: All group 1 and 2 applicants (1420 in 2016, 447 in 2015, 1615 in 2014)



Guidance notes	Telephone guidance notes recall %	Online guidance notes recall %
The application guidance for the programme you were applying to	35%	67%
Evaluation guidance	5%	40%
Digital technology in heritage projects	5%	23%
Activity plan guidance	4%	46%
Learning guidance	4%	14%
Community participation	3%	36%
How to involve young people in heritage projects	3%	24%
Natural heritage	3%	8%
Volunteering	3%	31%
Management and maintenance plan guidance	3%	26%
Project business plan guidance	3%	18%
Interpretation guidance	2%	13%
Audience development	2%	16%
Archaeology guidance	2%	3%
Oral history	2%	19%
Don't know / no answer	51%	9%

These differences are driven by the fact that online surveys provide respondents with more time and 'mental space' to recall (and even research) specific elements of the service. A telephone survey requires respondents to remember under the pressure of a telephone call, which can be difficult for parts of the process that took place up to six months in the past. The lay-out of the online survey also encourages higher responses to information-based question – respondents can see the information sources on their screen during the duration of the time they are answering the question, whereas on the telephone they are expected to remember each source as they are read out.

Generally, the telephone methodology is effective in generating spontaneous information prompts, a measure of effectiveness. However, the greater granularity afforded by the online methodology provides more complete and useful responses.