



Centris : Annual Report
A review of activities from
January 2006 to December 2006

Centris

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Introduction

This is the annual report of CENTRIS (officially known as the Centre for Innovation in Social Policy and Practice Ltd)

Charity No. 299877 Company No. 2277906.

CENTRIS is an independent not-for-profit organisation committed to the identification and development of innovative social policy and practice.

The period reviewed runs from January 2006 to December 2006.

Objects

CENTRIS was established in 1988. Its mission is to support innovative social policy and practice. Its method is to work with partners active in the field to develop solutions to social issues, through a mixture of research and innovatory initiatives.

Its constitution describes charitable objects 'for the benefit of the public to advance education, to promote the relief of sickness and the preservation of health and to promote the relief of poverty, in particular by promoting research into the role of individual self awareness, self development and personal responsibility in these fields, and the dissemination of the useful results of that research'.

Report

Three main activities are reported on:

- **Civil society**
- **Fathers and masculinity**
- **Social justice and philanthropy**

Civil society

CENTRIS has had a longstanding interest in civil society, with publications dating back more than 18 years. From the outset of this work, a key concern has been the independence of the voluntary and community sector. As time has gone on, this issue has risen high up the agenda because of the shift towards government contracting of public services. This may benefit the voluntary and community sector while at the same time making it harder for voluntary and community organisations to retain their independence to pioneer new approaches and advocate changes to established services.

Over the past year, CENTRIS has worked with seven charitable foundations to conduct a study called 'The Value and Independence of the Voluntary Sector'. In addition to a literature survey, this has entailed studies of 121 different voluntary organisations, together with in-depth studies of 14 organisations using the 'logic

model of evaluation' as the methodology. Fieldwork had been completed in December 2006, and analysis begun. It is intended to publish the work in 2007.

Fathering and masculinity

Following the successful publication of the book, *A Question of Balance* in 2004, which looked at how men are included in services for parents, Barry Knight has resumed his role as writer in residence with Children North East. Detailed interviews have been conducted with fathers, workers in Sure Starts and Children's Centres and other service providers. It is clear that fathers have gained ground in social policy in practice and the field is unrecognisable from the situation in 1992 when CENTRIS first began to work on fathering. A major follow up to *A Question of Balance* will be published in September 2007.

Social justice philanthropy

Social justice philanthropy remains a core area of work for CENTRIS. Two substantial grants from the Ford Foundation have enabled this work to move forward very well this year. The first grant is designed to strengthen social justice grantmaking among US foundations, building a coalition of individuals and organisations committed to working together to create new foundations and transform existing ones in favour of social justice.

Three articles have been published during the year, and a summary publication is planned.

The second is designed to strengthen social justice grantmaking in other parts of the world by a grant to evaluate the International Initiative to Strengthen Philanthropy, a two-year programme to offer grants, technical assistance and peer learning opportunities to private foundations across the globe.

CENTRIS continued to support Foundations for Peace, a network of community and independent foundations working in divided societies. Those involved include foundations in Northern Ireland, South Africa and the Balkans as well as organisations in Israel and Sri Lanka. The aim of the Foundations for Peace network is to support each foundation's work in its own community, and to enable foundations to work collaboratively, and together create a platform for the common aims of social justice, inclusion and peacebuilding.

Structure and operations

The effectiveness of CENTRIS depends on an energetic group of staff, associates, and volunteers, combined with extensive use of modern technology, and oversight from a skilled group of trustees: Roy Evans, Penny Lee CBE, and Chris Webb. Barry Knight is Secretary to the Trustees and Allan Sked is manager.

Finance

The audited accounts for 2005-2006, show that CENTRIS is in a healthy financial position. Reserves stood at £512299 at the end of the financial year on 31 July 2006. Of this £276353 was 'restricted' and £235946 was 'unrestricted'. This is in line with Trustees' policy.

Summary of accounts 2005-2006

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Grants	125929	Technical support	7546
Investment	10354	Project Costs	117765
Fees, sales etc	36161	Administration	11105
		Office costs	6775
		Accommodation	19346
		Sundry	3356
Totals	172444		165893
Balance Sheet			
Tangible Fixed Assets	11314		
Net Current Assets	500985		
Net Assets	512299		

CENTRIS' future plans

CENTRIS has undertaken a review of its activities and has set priorities for the future. A number of important projects, begun in earlier years, are now coming to fruition. The work on social justice philanthropy, begun seven years ago, has

become established and the Ford Foundation now has an established portfolio on social justice. CENTRIS is continuing to support a global network of 'Foundations for Peace', which is a group of private foundations that work to bring peace in areas divided by violent political conflict.

CENTRIS will continue to give high priority to this area, and work with the range of foundations mentioned earlier in the report.

Private funders are becoming increasingly concerned about the independence of the voluntary and community sector. In 2007, CENTRIS will publish a major study on this and disseminate the results.

On fathering and masculinity, a follow-up to the book *A Question of Balance* will be published in 2007 and a launch held to disseminate the results to practitioners.

Risks and resources

CENTRIS is now responsible for running its own office with a five-year lease on the premises.

Within the new premises CENTRIS has created meeting rooms, a resource centre and a training facility for organisations pursuing charitable objectives or otherwise meet criteria for the public good.

These changes have been ambitious and challenging and detailed monitoring of resource usage is required to ensure that plans and strategies remain on track.

In 2007 CENTRIS will continue to meet the challenge of running its own office and facilities and will introduce new and – where necessary - improve on existing procedures for managing this resource. This includes building maintenance, security, recycling of waste, use of facilities by others and Health & Safety implications.

CENTRIS minimises risk by using an ongoing review system. The system is IT based and has comprehensive features which alerts users to up and coming issues, reviews dates ,logs events and assists in the planning process.

During 2006 CENTRIS reviewed and redesigned its website. The new website was designed so that online surveys can be undertaken and so that a forum is created where people can exchange views or ask questions about a variety of relevant issues. The usage and content of the new features are closely monitored and reviewed so that no inappropriate material is posted on site and so that membership of the forums are strictly controlled.