

Plymouth Crowd Helps City Win International Prize

Submitted by: Knot PR

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<https://vimeo.com/367598226> - 3 min explainer video

We've done it! Plymouth has won the Cities of Service Engaged Cities Award.

Cities of Service announced today that Plymouth is one of three winners of the Engaged Cities Award (other winners were Flint, Michigan and San Francisco). The award recognises cutting-edge techniques to engage residents to solve problems. Plymouth was recognised for demonstrating leadership in citizen engagement and working with their residents to develop & implement bold, new strategies that address long-standing challenges.

Plymouth council leader Tudor Evans was at CityLab DC, last night to receive a \$75,000 prize for the city's innovative City Change Fund, which uses Crowdfund Plymouth to distribute funds raised by developments through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Since 2015, the Council has distributed £407,681 across 82 projects with the Crowdfund Plymouth platform, raising over £1.5 million in the city.

The Council uses crowdfunder.co.uk to distribute the 'neighbourhood proportion' of the infrastructure levy and pledges up to 50 per cent of a project's costs (up to a maximum of £20,000), if they met the legislative and Council's criteria and priorities.

Funded projects include a café and comprehensive resource centre that has become a community hub for dementia patients and their caregivers; a children's theatre; a women's soccer league; public art displays; and a new school playground.

Council leader Tudor Evans said: "This is huge. Not just for the council, but for the city of Plymouth, for the groups whose incredible ideas have helped add life and spark to where they live and to the generous people who pitched in a few pounds to make events happen and projects come to life.

"We have already had loads of interest from councils looking to replicate this scheme to the benefit of their own residents - this prize gives us an even bigger platform. The City Change Fund has helped us reconnect to groups across the city. It's people power in action and it's through contributions made by developers."

The Cities of Service Engaged Cities award is a globally prestigious award, underwritten by Bloomberg Philanthropies, which highlights the ways that cities are shaping the future with residents and allows cities around the world to learn best practices and implement similar solutions in their own cities.

Myung J. Lee, Cities of Service Executive Director said: "Plymouth empowered its citizenry to work on projects for community benefit with a creative crowdfunding solution,"

"They raised and distributed over £1 million, and the process empowered the city's residents to see themselves as problem solvers and partners to the city instead of just taxpayers who receive services."

Some facts and figures about the Plymouth City Change Fund:

We pledged our maximum pledge of £20,000 six times on:

- Lady Astor Statue
- Street Factory - helping to renovate their building
- The Clipper - bringing a long term empty building back into use for community benefit and affordable housing
- The Yoga Loft Plymouth – renovation works for a long term empty building to put it into use as a yoga studio
- Mayflower Forest – Building a Mayflower Forest on Marsh Mills roundabout to improve the entrance to our city
- Devonport Sport For All – Funds to create a 4G pitch at Devonport School for Boys (which is open for public use)

Our smallest pledge was £250 on Radiant Grotto, a Santa's grotto in the city centre - a great example of how small amounts can have a big impact.

- We have pledged £1,000 or less 18 times
- 9,175 people have pledged on 82 projects, making it an average of 112 pledges per project
- The highest number of pledges received was 1,908 for the Blurt Foundation, a Plymouth-based nationwide project that focuses on raising awareness of depression and helping people access tools to seek help.
- The second highest number of pledges was 696 for the Lady Astor Statue. We pledged £20,000, they raised £131,792
- The third most pledged project, with 247 pledges, is one of our most recent - Project Pollenize - is a Plymouth Community Interest Company looking to tackle pollinator decline through community and technology and aim to populate four new sites with hives.

Dawn Bebe, Co-Founder & Director, crowdfunder.co.uk summarises “We are delighted that our pioneering partnership with Plymouth City Council has been so successful. It’s incredible to think that from the initial spark of an idea to launching a campaign to crowdfund a city, now over £2million, has been raised for projects in the City, some brilliant ideas have happened - and now we’ve won an international award. We look forward to using this model to crowdfund more cities and tackle more of society’s challenges by making ideas happen.” Dawn Bebe, Co-Founder & Director, crowdfunder.co.uk

About Cities of Service:

Cities of Service began a decade ago and has worked with hundreds of cities to involve citizens in creative and effective ways. Underwritten by Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Engaged Cities Award shines light on the growing number of ways city leaders are co-creating the future with their residents.

Cities of Service received more than 100 applications from cities in the Americas and Europe for this year’s Engaged Cities Award. The winners were selected based on key selection criteria, including significant work with citizens to tackle a public problem, evidence of impact, and potential to apply the

strategy to other issues and geographies. Each winning city receives \$75,000 that can be used at their discretion in support of furthering the city's efforts to engage their citizens to tackle problems.

The Engaged Cities Award was open to cities with populations of 30,000+ in the Americas and Europe. For more information about the Cities of Service Engaged Cities Award, please visit:
<https://citiesofservice.org/press-release/cities-of-service-announces-the-winners-of-2019-engaged-cities-award>

About Crowdfunder:

Crowdfunder empowers people to turn their great ideas into reality. They are the UK's #1 rewards-based crowdfunding platform having raised over £60m for start-ups, business ideas, charities, community groups, sports clubs, political movements and so much more through crowdfunding.

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk>

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