The calm before the storm?

Thank you to everyone who has been so supportive and enthusiastic about what we are doing at Tony Elischer Foundation. It’s been a few weeks since our launch and word has definitely been spreading about the opportunities we offer for talented fundraisers. We’ve had contact from fundraisers from Brazil to Bradford and have already received the first few applications to become our first programme participants.

The **cut-off date for this first group is 4th September** so still plenty of time and do get in touch if you have any questions about applying.

One of the most common questions so far has been to ask us to be more specific about how much experience you should have before applying. The answer may not feel as focused as you would like but we are deliberately not being prescriptive about this as we will be able to match individuals with suitable mentors according to their needs and what they want to achieve. There is a need to have had a level of fundraising experience which means you understand and have performed well in the role and sector, but what we are really looking for is the commitment and capacity to learn and to have the qualities which will enable you to really make the most of the support which will be available to you. It’s really that undefinable charisma and quality which make you stand out from the crowd.

Although we have launched, in many ways it still feels like the calm before the storm. Until we are working directly with the individuals who will benefit from our support there will inevitably be a feeling of anticipation and tentative excitement at what we hope to achieve.

This period is giving us time to plan more and make sure everything is in place to provide the best possible programme. Our team of mentors is growing and we have been delighted by the offers to get involved. Quite frankly they are an amazing team of experts and leaders with the calibre and credentials which make us hugely proud to say they are supporting and working with us. They will definitely be making a significant impact through their mentoring and guidance in the coming months and years.

I am also using this time to spread the word and get to know how we can best connect with potential participants. This week I had the privilege to attend the Institute of Fundraising Convention in London. It was really motivating to be amongst hundreds of enthusiastic, positive and committed individuals and it was heartening to see such pride in the profession and a drive to improve and learn. I hope they looked in the goody bag on the train home and saw our postcard describing how we help!

From the sessions I attended at the convention, I am left mulling over a few thoughts and new ideas for how we work. Mostly it reinforced how much talent there is but also how important it is that we invest in developing, motivating and retaining these individuals. I know we will play a role in this and really can’t wait to get going!