



Philanthropy Fellow Profile – Pete Yeo

In his twenties, Pete donated to and gave his support to very large charities such as the World Wildlife Fund and Friends of the Earth. It wasn't until 2004 that his philanthropy truly began when a friend introduced him to The Funding Network (TFN). The friend had sensed that this was what Pete needed at the time: a good platform to take his philanthropy to the next level, learning about holistic social change first-hand, and allowing him, in the company of peers, to more effectively unleash previously guarded wealth in line with his desire for a better world. Pete has supported TFN ever since, being instrumental in and working alongside Devon Community Foundation to bring it to Devon in 2011. It was around this time that Pete started building a fund with Devon Community Foundation following their first Philanthropy Forecast event in 2010. Aside from his rich experience with TFN, a key influence on his philanthropy has been the leading charity Peace Direct, from whom he learnt of the power of grassroots-led social change and of the interconnectedness of social and environmental issues. More recently, his involvement with both Dartington's School for Social Entrepreneurs and Transition Town Totnes' Local Entrepreneur Forum has opened his eyes to the value of supporting local social entrepreneurs in community.

Philanthropy, giving in service, is now Pete's life; this has been a natural outcome of his own search for an optimum way to live life. As a donor, the greatest challenge faced by Pete is that once known as donor, requests for help increased and he is now learning the best way to filter these appropriately and give effectively. Pete became a Philanthropy Fellow in 2013, he values the benefits the Philanthropy Fellowship brings such as the opportunities to meet with fellow donors and see projects to explore how our giving can develop. The opportunities to team up with other donors in order to leverage support for mutually favoured projects has been invaluable to Pete. The Philanthropy Fellowship also provides a useful South West regional 'big picture' perspective that can help to dissolve illusory divisions. Philanthropic advice and support has played a significant role in his giving; this was limited and informal in the early years but more recently there are more formal opportunities for Pete to take a more active role as curator of TFN member only events and DCF's Seeing Is Believing visits.

Giving has thoroughly enriched Pete's life, for him the best parts are witnessing first-hand the impact of his giving, being part of something significant, meeting inspiring people and making new friends. His future philanthropic plans are to continue to improve the quality of his giving by supporting social entrepreneurs within the context of their communities through the Devon Community foundation 'Earth to Earth' fund. His advice to others on giving would be "Don't get fixated on plans and ideas instead trust change makers to navigate their own journeys, allow them the freedom to be creative and more fully self-realised".

