

Introduction

The context

The aim of the Directory

The Hardman Directory aims to provide up-to-date information on the resources (in particular financial resources) available to prisoners, those serving sentences in the community, prison leavers and to those who support them, across the UK. This is a guide primarily for prisoners, however, many of the organisations included also provide grants or assistance to a wider group of people.

Why produce this book?

Many years ago I would receive a significant number of letters from prisoners, and people supporting prisoners, asking if The Hardman Trust could help provide money for a wide range of purposes.

They were also writing to charities that I knew no longer existed or that didn't fund individuals, and so they were wasting their limited resources on the paper and the stamps. It must also have been demoralising writing to charities with little or no likelihood of a response. I decided to research charities that would actually provide funding to individual prisoners and prison leavers and in 2005 I drafted the first edition of what was then called 'The Prisoner Funder Directory' for prisoners in England and Wales.

I would like to make it clear that from the beginning we have sought in the production and distribution of this Directory not to discriminate in any way against anyone, no matter what their background.

The development of the Directory with the help of so many people

Over the years we added information we hoped would be helpful to prisoners in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and information on housing; employment; dealing with debt and on the benefits system. In response to prisoners' suggestions, we printed in colour, added photos and renamed the book 'The Hardman Directory'. This year, along with numerous updates, we have added a number of new entries, particularly in the *Emergency* section.

Stories of hope

I leave it to Chris, Lisa, Obi, Jake, Jon, Shanice, Derek and Iain, with their previous experience as prisoners, to explain the challenges facing those in prison and those recently released. They kindly told us from personal experience how to face these challenges in a way that leads to a better life; sometimes with a little bit of outside help.

Ian Wilson

How to use this Directory to approach funders

Getting funding support is generally not easy. It can be especially difficult finding funding support from inside prison, but there is some help available when you know who to contact and how to apply.







If you are looking for money you may wish to turn immediately to the orange Funds section. All the funders in this Directory will accept applications from either individual prisoners, prison leavers or both. They may also accept applications from referral agencies but each fund has restrictions on who can apply.

Important

When viewing the pages showing more detailed descriptions, only apply if:

- 1 you are in the right geographical area where the fund operates
- 2 you fit the description in 'Who can apply' and if in this section it says someone must apply on your behalf, make sure that the right person does
- 3 you want something that appears in 'What can be funded'

Funders are arranged in six sections:

-  Prison Service administered support
-  Education and training – courses and equipment
-  Art
-  Business start-up
-  Household
-  Emergency

Don't leave your application to the last minute and give yourself plenty of time, especially if the course, equipment and materials are expensive. Finding funding at short notice is extremely difficult, if not almost impossible. So try and make your application at least 9 months in advance as some funders take this long to reach their decision.

Keep a copy of your letter and/or your completed form as you may need it later.

The availability of contact details

Please note the contact details shown in The Hardman Directory are those available to the general public. This may, in some cases, make applying more difficult if you are in prison given the restrictions connected with the use of a phone or the internet. Further information about the various funds may be easier to access on a home leave or when you have been released.

... and finally, reporting back to your benefactor

Funders like to receive a progress report from their successful candidates, so do take the time to let them know how the funds were used. Your report may include both successes and setbacks with your course or activity. Maintaining contact like this may place you in a better position to make a second application for money from the same funder at a later date. You will see extracts from letters from successful candidates scattered throughout the Directory.

Organisations receive a large number of requests for money and/or help so do not be too disappointed if you are not successful. Draw up a list of those charities you may be eligible to apply to and approach as many of them as possible. This will give you a better chance of success; and a number of smaller grants could add up to the sum you are looking for.



Stories of hope - Derek

What I'd really like to get through to anyone who may have a challenged background is don't give up. It doesn't matter what's happened to you in your past: if you're willing to change, you can change – it's about your commitment. Just be a little bit selfish (and prisoners are good at that). A criminal record does not need to hold you back. Only your imagination will. You can do anything you set your mind to regardless of any obstacles.

Sometimes, part of the learning process is failure.

Sometimes, you must fail to succeed.

Do not let your history determine your future – you are the only one who controls that.

During my time in prison I found a big void in the communication system.

The present postal system was slow and unreliable.

Regular contact with friends and relatives helps prisoners' wellbeing as well as reducing re-offending rates.

After setting up a pilot email service initially, the service has been rolled out into all UK prisons as well as expanding into prisons in Holland. Australia is also interested in rolling out the Emailprisoner service.

I have also introduced a secure payment service business which allows families to make deposits directly into the prison finance departments which again has and continues to prove hugely successful.

In 2015/16 I sold the company to Unilink software and together with Unilink, Emailprisoner won the Queens Award for Enterprise in innovation. I remained CEO for a few years before taking a back seat and I am now a consultant to the company.

Society may label us as an ex-offender but we can change the labels we identify with to success, hope and lifting self-imposed limitations.

Derek Richards Jones is a Trustee of The Inside Out Trust referenced on page 217. We are grateful to Derek for giving us permission to share his thoughts with our readers.