



Ageing & Social Cohesion

Below are details of programmes and projects funded through our Ageing & Social Cohesion work, one of the key priorities identified through our [Fulfilling Potential](#) aim – to assist the most disadvantaged in society to fulfil their potential by building connections and developing opportunities.

International & UK based work

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is an international charitable foundation with cultural, educational and social interests which aims to connect and enrich the experiences of individuals, families and communities. With its headquarters in Lisbon, but with branches in London and Paris, the Foundation is in a privileged position to support transnational work which tackles contemporary issues facing Europe, in the context of an ageing population. With a history of working for the benefit of both older and younger groups at risk, the UK Branch and the [Gulbenkian Human Development Programme](#) identified ageing as a common priority and in 2008 began an exploratory phase commissioning papers and hosting investigative seminars focusing on three key areas; **dementia**, **intergenerational issues** and **isolation** amongst older people.

Following the results of this investigative phase, the Foundation felt much could be achieved by working transnationally on intergenerational practice (IP) particularly. And so earlier this year a joint project Ageing and Social Cohesion, was launched with the central aim of improving social cohesion whilst lessening isolation in the UK and Portugal through strengthening relations across the ages. This led to the development of the IntergenerationAll programme and the support of the European Mapping of Intergenerational Learning (EMIL) among others which will build on our mission to support the development and sharing of best practice in the fields in which we work.

Besides our international work on IP, the UK branch has decided to maintain a focus on work which reduces **isolation and loneliness** among older people, while the Gulbenkian Human Development Programme will continue to work on **dementia**.

Intergenerational practice:

We feel intergenerational practice is key in future-proofing our societies for oncoming demographic change. It is clear that if families, communities and nation states wish to find solutions to population ageing which are fair for all, work must be done to build resilience within communities – and critically – across the generations. Intergenerational approaches are not only nice-to-have but are now an essential part of practice in ensuring communities remain cohesive and flexible in times of change.

- [IntergenerationAll](#) (Entre Gerações)
In 2010/2011 the Foundation is supporting 18 pilot projects, 11 in the UK and 7 in Portugal, to plan, test and implement their ideas for new intergenerational activities. The projects represent a range of models and approaches to intergenerational practice and though each will undertake a unique journey as they find new ways of working, they will all be offered support to improve

collaboration with their beneficiaries. Thinkpublilc, the UK's leading service design agency, will help projects to work with participants to ensure their activities produce the greatest impact through utilising co- design and prototyping methods.

- [EMIL](#)
EMIL (European Mapping of Intergenerational Learning) is a European-wide network of intergenerational practitioners, representing numerous organisations from a variety of backgrounds in over 25 European countries with the aim to collectively influence the intergenerational practice debate and further develop intergenerational learning throughout Europe.
- [RSA](#)
We are supporting the second edition of Action For Age, a students' design award for work which looks at innovative and user-centred ways of engaging older people in a process of co-designing solutions to issues of direct concern to them with a particular interest in how intergenerational contact might achieve this.
- [Grandparents Plus](#)
Following the publication in June 2010 of a large scale comparative scoping study to assess the role of grandparenting across the EU, Grandparents Plus, with advice from the [Beth Johnson Foundation](#) and with research led by the [Institute of Gerontology](#) at Kings College London will be undertaking the first in depth comparative study of the role of grandparents in family life across a number of EU member states.
- [UnLtd.](#)
We are enabling UnLtd. to develop through their Ageing Challenge programme the UnLtd. *Engage* scheme which aims to promote social entrepreneurship to address issues of an ageing society, particularly encouraging older people to engage with social entrepreneurship.
- [London Youth](#)
In collaboration with the Beth Johnson Foundation, London Youth delivered a series of workshops with young people exploring their ideas of age and ageing; the report and dvd were published in November 2010 and are available on all partners' websites..
- [Fevered Sleep](#)
We supported the research and development costs for a new theatre production by Fevered Sleep, *On Ageing*, which was created through an eighteen-month devising process, working closely with children, parents, grandparents, other artists, elders, and an advisory group of gerontologists. The Piece was performed at the Young Vic Sept – Oct 2010.

Isolation & Loneliness:

We know that at least 10% of older people feel lonely often to all of the time, and these levels have remained static for at least the past decade. While there are many excellent policies and practices which seek to address the causes of isolation, such as in the fields of housing, nutrition, transport and so on, we believe a more concerted and coordinated effort is needed if we are to tackle this major psychosocial problem which affects an ever-growing demographic.

- [Campaign to end Loneliness](#)
We are providing seed-funding for new the Campaign to End Loneliness bringing together four organisations to work on a creating connections in older age; Age UK Oxfordshire, Counsel and Care, Independent Age and WRVS. The Campaign to End Loneliness will raise awareness of the problems caused by loneliness and why they matter; promote what works in reducing loneliness in older age; identify gaps for further action; create a vision of a society where loneliness in older age is ended and identify what we all can do to future-proof our lives against it.
We also supported a number of developmental initiatives for the Campaign including;
 - **Age UK Oxfordshire**
To host a symposium to assemble existing evidence on isolation and loneliness, gain an understanding of priority groups, and disseminate a summary report to drive concerted action for a new coalition.
 - **Counsel & Care**
To undertake a comprehensive assessment of organisational models a new coalition might adopt in running a large-scale national campaign against loneliness in older age.
- [Age UK Oxfordshire](#)
While tying in well with the Campaign's work, we separately funded Age UK Oxon to carry out a comprehensive mapping of the local community as a basis for understanding the needs inter-relationships of the older population and to act as a guide to priority actions in tackling loneliness in a specific geographical area.
- [Independent Age](#)
We supported Independent Age to investigate the current and potential use of new technology in reducing the social isolation of older people; their report *Older people, technology and community* was published in May 2010.
- [Online TV news channel for older people](#)
We awarded a grant at the end of 2009 to Independent Age for the development phase of an online TV news channel for older people, in partnership with [Inclusive Digital](#). This will be a new, not-for-profit, public service web TV channel aiming to address older people's interests.

Other research:

- [Centre for Social Justice](#)
With Age UK, we are co-funding CSJ to produce the 'Elder Care' report, a major piece of research on the current and emerging needs of older people in Britain that will lead to policy recommendations for tackling problems of elder care provision.
- [Ippr](#)
In December 2009, we supported the publication of *Getting on: Wellbeing in Later life* by ippr. As part of their wider work on 'the politics of ageing', the report sought to plug the gap between personal experience of ageing, and high-level policy debate, and to place a clearer focus on inequalities in older people's wellbeing.