

# **Evaluation of the 'Experiencing Scotland - supplying a quality food and drink offer' project**

**Report to Scottish Enterprise, September 2016  
- Executive Summary**

## Executive Summary

This is the report of an evaluation and economic impact assessment of the project: *'Experiencing Scotland - supplying a quality food and drink offer'* (hereafter ES). It has been undertaken on behalf of Scottish Enterprise (SE) by Stewart Brown Associates Limited during April to June 2016.

The objectives set by SE for this study include assessments of: (i) achievements against project objectives and targets; (ii) extent to which the original market failure rationale has been justified and addressed; (iii) actual (to date) and anticipated economic impact arising from the project; (iv) any other benefits, tangible or intangible, that were gained by participants; (v) value for money (vfm) achieved by SE's investment; (vi) efficacy of what has been delivered by the project; (vii) what more, if anything, could have been done to help participants realise benefits; and (viii) any learning for future developments.

## Summary findings

The ES project involved the following:

- c.190 participants attending workshop
- 34 businesses receiving 1-2-1 support
- 6 major ("signature") event organisers receiving 121 support
- c.33 case studies developed with the co-operation of businesses
- a quarterly e-zine published.

The ES project engaged with most of the large food service companies originally targeted and was successful in engaging with other large and medium sized leisure contractors in the sector.

Feedback from business beneficiaries plus the views of stakeholders give an overall positive endorsement of the project and its achievements, albeit often in qualitative terms. Business survey results<sup>1</sup> reveal:

- a well-regarded project, with respondents reporting a high level of satisfaction with the activities and outputs for workshops and 1-2-1 support
- a strong sense that as a result of participation in the project, the majority of respondents are better informed and more interested and capable of exploiting Scottish produce in their offer to visitors, and with
- a majority of respondents forecasting the purchase of more Scottish produce in future.

In a survey of firms in receipt of 1-2-1 support:

- c.94% of businesses were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall value for the 1-2-1 business support
- 70% businesses agreed or strongly agreed to being better informed about opportunities associated with using Scottish food & drink
- 59% businesses agreed or strongly agreed to be better able to source and purchase Scottish food & drink supplies
- 63% reported a significant positive impact on how the company sources and purchases Scottish food and drink
- 71% businesses agreed or strongly agreed to being better placed to work in partnership with Scottish food & drink suppliers

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<sup>1</sup> Full details of the business survey results should be reviewed when drawing conclusions from percentages given in this summary as in many cases the number of respondents is small.

- 65% business agreed or strongly agreed to being able to innovate in partnership with Scottish food & drink suppliers

In a survey of workshop participants:

- 85% reported being better informed about opportunities associated with using Scottish food & drink
- 62% reported being better able to source and purchase Scottish food & drink
- 77% reported being better placed to work in partnership with Scottish food & drink suppliers
- 66% reported being better able to innovate in partnership with Scottish food & drink suppliers
- 76% reported being better able to improve the marketing of their Scottish food & drink offer
- 41% reported a significant positive impact on how the company sources and purchases Scottish food and drink
- 71% reported being better placed to develop staff skills.

Following participation in the ES project, 20 firms have reported forming new business relationships: overall these have involved c.67 suppliers.

Consultations with stakeholders point to:

- overall an excellent project - relevant and well delivered
- maintained a strong strategic alignment throughout - enabling SE to make a substantial contribution to both Year of Food and Drink 2015 and Homecoming Scotland 2014, in line with Scottish Government priorities and in partnership with EventScotland and Scotland Food and Drink
- particularly important connections with large organisations with multiple food and drink outlets.

The original rationale for intervention was based on an “information failure” in the market and on a perceived deficit in business capability to take advantage of time-sensitive opportunities linked to major events in Scotland in 2014 and 2015. Evidence from business beneficiaries indicates that support provided by the ES project has helped firms to address these issues.

On economic impact, the net additional GVA for the ES project, including the multiplier, aggregated over seven years to 2018/19 lies between £961k and £1,105k.

On the assessment of value for money, based on cumulative impact over seven years, the GVA impact ratio (net additional GVA including multiplier per £ of spend) is in the range 5.19 to 6.03. This points to an intervention delivering moderate to good value.