



**WORKING WITH FOODCYCLE**

**AN INVITATION TO PARTNER**





# Welcome

Welcome to FoodCycle's brochure inviting you to run a fantastic community project with us.

FoodCycle builds communities in particular amongst people who are at risk of food poverty and social isolation. We do this through a weekly communal meal, served in a warm dignified and welcoming environment.

We rely on our energetic and enthusiastic volunteers to gather surplus food from supermarkets and local stores and "ready steady cook" style turn this into a three-course meal for guests.

By serving in a free community space we keep costs low and the locality ensures guests and volunteers make friends. In the past three years we have developed, tested and refined our social franchising model so that organisations like yours can run their own FoodCycle Hub.

We already work with a number of partners such as Outward, St Mary's in Sheffield and the John Pound Centre (all of whom are keen to expand and run further projects with us). We have excellent relations with all the major supermarkets at head office who support our work. We know that food poverty and social isolation unfortunately exists throughout the UK, but with our model you can help address this in your locality.

For many of you budgets are tight, and are forecast to tighten with cuts to statutory funding. However we have worked with partners to help them access funds they might otherwise have found difficult to obtain. In some cases we have strengthened a partner's statutory funding bid.

Please enjoy the rest of this brochure and find out how our franchise programme could work for you.

Best wishes,

*Mary McGrath*

**FoodCycle Chief Executive**



# Who is FoodCycle?

FoodCycle is the largest and leading network of community kitchens in the UK. Our aims are to:



**BUILD  
STRONGER  
COMMUNITIES**

through a weekly communal meal where guests and volunteer make friends

**REDUCE  
FOOD  
POVERTY**

by providing a nutritious three course meal to those in need

**REDUCE  
SOCIAL  
ISOLATION**

by reaching out to the most vulnerable and making them feel welcome

We do this through our Hubs – local projects that make use of resources that already exist: surplus food, spare kitchen spaces, and the time and energy of volunteers.

Working with partner charities and community groups, we turn surplus food into healthy, delicious meals, served for free in a warm and welcoming environment to vulnerable people in the community. Since 2009, we have served over 125,000 meals made using over 146,000kg of surplus food.

Over the years we have built strong relationships at head office with Sainsbury's, Tesco, Waitrose, Marks & Spencer, Morrisons and Asda and collect surplus from them at a local level.

**Sainsbury's**

**MARKS &  
SPENCER**

**TESCO**

**M MORRISONS**

**Waitrose**

**ASDA**

*"We've been a proud partner of FoodCycle from the very beginning. Our joint relationship ensures that together we can fight social isolation and food poverty through nutritious meals shared in a friendly environment"*

Paul Crew Sainsbury's Head of Sustainability

*"It is an idea elegant in its simplicity: a few volunteers gather unwanted food from local supermarkets and businesses, devise a menu and cook it for the homeless, mentally ill people or others going hungry. Leftovers are put out for diners to take home"*

The Guardian

# The difference you can make

## WHY TAKE ACTION?

In the UK today,

- around 4 million people are affected by food poverty
- almost a million people accessed emergency food provision in 2014 alone
- 97% of communities in the UK have become more socially fragmented in the past 30 years
- social isolation is the equivalent in health terms as smoking 15 cigarettes a day (UCL)
- meanwhile over 400,000 tonnes of surplus food is wasted at a retail level each year (WRAP)

We know you're committed to helping your clients and we'd love to work with you so we can support vulnerable people together.



IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, OUR FOCUS IS TO EXPAND THE HUB PROGRAMME TO 50 FOODCYCLE HUBS.

## WHO ATTENDS A FOODCYCLE HUB?

FoodCycle works to promote an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome and no-one has to prove their need. Our Hubs are open to anyone who feels they would benefit from a good-quality nutritious meal in a friendly community atmosphere.

Our monitoring and evaluation demonstrates that:

72%

beneficiaries report skipping at least one meal in a week

68%

of guests at a FoodCycle meal are out of work

85%

say they struggle to afford basics such as food or bills

62%

of guests live alone, many over the age of 65

1/4

of guests are affected by mental health issues

## How is FoodCycle different?

We understand that many of your clients may have complex lives – so our projects address food poverty and isolation simultaneously by serving a hot nutritious communal meal as opposed to being given items to take home.



We do not operate a voucher or referral system and – with the exception of some closed projects (which provide mental health support or HIV/AIDS services) – our doors are open to everyone.



Your guests will sit down together and are able to make choices about what they'd like to eat. We don't serve meat and fish, so our meals are accessible to people of all cultures and religions, and our meals tend to contain at least five portions of fruit and vegetables.



Our volunteers are always working to improve our guest experience so that meals are fun, welcoming and dignified. Your clients will enjoy table service as well as proper crockery and cutlery.

This is a chance to mix with others and to feel part of your local community.

*"There are lots of places in London that you can get fed – I remember that from when I was on the street – but you would have to go in with body armour on. FoodCycle is peaceful, tranquil, pleasant and welcoming and a lot of these places are not...when you see places like this, it reaffirms your faith in humanity"*

FoodCycle guest

# The change you will make

Your guests will make friends and meet others in their community over a healthy meal in a warm and friendly environment. We conduct an annual M&E survey as well as gathering weekly data via our volunteer management system in order to understand how we make a difference and to seek improvements to our service wherever possible. It also helps secure essential funding.

87%

of guests say that they feel more part of the community

85%

have made new friends at their local meal

60%

of guests say that coming to FoodCycle has increased their confidence

73%

of guests eat more fruit and vegetables after coming to a FoodCycle meal

70%

of guests think more about healthy eating



*"We found FoodCycle to be a fabulous organisation to work with. Since opening a FoodCycle Hub in Hackney, we've supported clients to volunteer and gain key life skills. Outward works with people with learning disabilities and we wanted to give them opportunities to volunteer in a kitchen environment, enjoy sitting down to eat with a mixed group of people and develop their social skills. This is a wonderful opportunity to engage with local communities and give something back"*

**Peter Little, CEO Outward**

Since we started cooking we have served over 125,000 meals – and held over 1,000 dining events each year.

A woman with a green hairnet and a blue apron is focused on her work in a kitchen. In the background, another person in a dark blue shirt and hairnet is visible, along with kitchen equipment like a large pot and a sign that says 'Wet Soap Wash Rinse Dry'.

**FOODCYCLE  
HACKNEY,  
IN EAST LONDON**

**SERVES LUNCH EACH THURSDAY IN THE NEW KINGSHOLD CENTRE  
THIS IS A JOINT PROJECT BETWEEN FOODCYCLE AND OUTWARD**



*"FoodCycle is not complicated, it's very simple. I'd like to come here more often, and I really appreciate coming to somewhere that cares about helping people out - to have a social space. Some people have a real need to get some comfort out of life: they don't know where to look"*

Simon, Hackney

*"FoodCycle provides a service that is not just about food, it's about other things. It's somewhere for people to go, to socialise, to mingle, to interact with other human beings. It passes time and it's more than just a plate of food"*

James, Hackney

# Let's work together

## OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

FoodCycle offers support to social franchise partners in six key areas:



***VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT:*** we offer an innovative volunteering model, allowing local volunteers to take real ownership of their projects. We have attracted over 5,000 volunteers since 2009.



***TRAINING AND RESOURCES:*** two-day induction training to set up a successful Hub, comprehensive operations manual, training resources, guidance materials and two Hub Leader conferences per year.



***ONGOING SUPPORT:*** dedicated Partnership Manager at FoodCycle Central, practical support and advice provided through regular visits as well as telephone and email contact, sharing of expertise and best practice from across the FoodCycle network.



***QUALITY ASSURANCE AND DEVELOPMENT:*** annual impact measurement and quality improvement of projects, support with strategic development and expansion of projects, guidance and support to achieve funding using the FoodCycle brand.



***NATIONAL RETAIL RELATIONSHIPS:*** our national contracts enable us to broker local relationships with supermarket stores, including Sainsbury's, Waitrose, Asda, Tesco, Morrisons, and Marks and Spencer.



***ONLINE SYSTEMS:*** integrated and secure online volunteer management system, impact measurement for both projects and individual volunteers and promotion of your project through FoodCycle's public-facing website and established social media presence.



## YOUR COMMITMENT



**A "NOMINATED INDIVIDUAL":** main point of contact and the local Hub Manager who spends 0.5 – 1 day each week supporting a team of committed volunteer Hub Leaders to run the FoodCycle project.



**MANAGEMENT FEES:** initial start-up cost and £2,500 a year for our package of ongoing support.



**LOCAL DIRECT COSTS:** small activity costs associated with running a FoodCycle Hub, paid to providers (e.g. insurance, travel expenses)



**COMMUNITY KITCHEN SPACE:** space to prepare and serve meals, in line with health and safety regulations. We can work together to find a suitable venue.





## *Next steps*

A brochure can only offer limited information. If you think the FoodCycle social franchise model would be of value to you and your clients, we would love to hear from you.

Please get in touch either by email at **franchise@foodcycle.org.uk**, or call us on **020 7729 2775** and speak to Head of Delivery.

### **FoodCycle**

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