

People and Places Development Support Contract March 2010 update



Welcome to the fourth update of the Big Lottery Fund's People and Places Development Support service provided by Tribal's A Big Hand team.

Since November 2006 the team has provided advice and support to 329 People and Places applicants. The support available includes:

- a dedicated helpline providing information and advice
- access to an outreach worker
- access to the Big Hand website and,
- a range of training events designed to meet applicants' needs.

This support service comes to an end on 30 June 2010.

Findings

During 2009 the Big Hand team received 109 requests for support.

The greatest demand for the support services came from South Wales (49%) followed by North Wales (21%) with 18% per cent from Mid Wales and 12% from West Wales.

The majority of organisations supported in South Wales are based in Cardiff, Swansea, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Neath Port Talbot. Mid Wales referrals are predominately from Powys, and the highest numbers for support in West Wales have come from Carmarthenshire. Anglesey, Flintshire and Gwynedd have generated the most referrals in North Wales.

Support needs analysis

Understanding, developing and achieving SMART project outcomes continue to be a challenge for many applicants. Organisations also have difficulties in clearly demonstrating that their projects' aims and objectives meet the identified needs of their target groups.

A notable growth area for support has been the provision of guidance in relation to monitoring and evaluation systems, as well as different approaches to community based consultation. This has included providing organisations with monitoring tools and examples of evaluation models to ensure that

applicants are able to demonstrate the impact of the project on beneficiaries.

Helpline enquiries

Over the past year the helpline has received enquires from 109 organisations. All callers are given the opportunity to talk to an advisor in English or Welsh and to date 5% of calls have been conducted in Welsh. Overall 96% of initial enquiries have involved requests for advice about how to respond to feedback received from the Big Lottery Fund after the outline proposal stage.

Other requests for support have included a small number of successful applicants seeking support and guidance on how to deliver and manage their projects effectively.

Big Hand website

The Big Hand website continues to be regularly accessed by applicants, and has been updated considerably over the past 12 months to include:

- Further examples of good practice.
- Frequently asked questions and answers covering relevant topics identified by the applicants.
- Useful toolkits to support applicants in the planning and delivery of their projects.
- The updated application guidelines have been uploaded in Welsh and English, as well as the most recent version of the Tribal Development Support Contract report to stakeholders and the Training Pamphlet.

The Big Hand website has also been upgraded to improve site navigation to ensure greater accessibility.

Delivery of one to one Support

Of the 109 applicant organisations supported in 2009:

- 67% have completed and submitted their People and Places application.
- 33% are continuing to develop their project ideas and prepare their applications or in some cases are seeking alternative funding

Of the submitted applications

- 41% have received a successful response and have collectively secured £18.8 million from the Big Lottery Fund's People and Places programme.
- 59% are still in assessment or have been rejected.

Training events

There continues to be a good response to the applicant training events. The most popular events are: 'Monitoring and evaluating your project' and 'Understanding, developing and achieving SMART outcomes' closely followed by 'Project planning and management'. The feedback has been positive and in addition to supporting applicants to develop and deliver their projects, the training events have also provided an excellent opportunity for networking, sharing ideas and exchanging information.

Representatives from the County Voluntary Councils and other interested third sector organisations have been encouraged to attend the training events alongside organisations that they are supporting in making People & Places applications.

To date 32 training events have been delivered across Wales and a further 7 events are scheduled to be delivered before the end of June 2010.

Engagement with the third sector and other stakeholders

Over the last year the Big Hand team and representatives from the third sector have continued to work together to support applicants. Examples of engagement with other agencies include working with regeneration officers, community development workers and County Voluntary Councils.

This collaboration, and the development of active working partnerships, is continuing to be effective in assisting and building the capacity of the applicants to develop their project plans and applications, and has included supporting applicants to:

- develop policies for issues such as health and safety, disability and child protection
- access local, regional and national research and results from consultation processes
- identify potential volunteers and how to recruit, support and manage volunteers
- network with local organisations to gauge the level of interest in the project as well as identifying partnership opportunities
- access tools and systems e.g. establishing pay roll systems

The involvement of regeneration officers has been beneficial in helping applicants to:

- access information in relation to regional and local community strategies
- raise the profile of particular projects and facilitate meetings between county and local authority strategic forums such as, the lifelong learning group, young people and children's forum and the economic partnership forum.

The development of active partnerships has been extremely effective in assisting and building the capacity of the applicants to fully develop their project plans and applications. The Big Hand team continues to ensure that all applicants are made aware of their local, regional and strategic contacts and signposts them to the relevant section of the Big Hand website to access full contact details.

Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction continues to be high. Surveys conducted during 2009, indicated that 91% of applicants rated the service provided by their outreach worker as excellent or good, and 90% rated the service overall as excellent or good.

We are committed to continuous quality improvement and have revised our customer satisfaction methodology to ensure that more questionnaires are returned and our support services fully meet the needs of the organisations.

Identified actions for the next 6 months:

- ▶ Deliver 7 training events across Wales and increase collaboration with the third sector and key stakeholders to ensure effective ongoing support for applicants
- ▶ Continue to enhance the www.abighand.org.uk website to include; more examples of best practice to stimulate interest and ideas.
- ▶ Continue to develop toolkits in response to the identified needs of the applicants
- ▶ Undertake a mystery shopping survey to monitor the service provided by the BIG Hand Team

If you would like further information about the People and Places development support contract please contact Fflur Lawton, Policy and Public Affairs Manager for Big Lottery Fund on 029 2067 8237 or email fflur.lawton@biglotteryfund.org.uk