

Dynamic, Inclusive Communities

Further Guidance

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BIG
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FUND



What are we trying to achieve?

Dynamic, Inclusive Communities is open only to Scotland's voluntary and community sector. It is about helping this sector build and strengthen itself.

We will use the £20 million available under this investment area to nurture and sustain dynamic, inclusive communities throughout Scotland by creating the conditions and an infrastructure through which healthy and vigorous voluntary and community sector activity can occur. It will achieve positive outcomes for volunteers, communities, voluntary organisations, and society more broadly.

We will use our investment to do all of this in a number of different ways as follows:

1. Strengthening and connecting wider networks

We want to help the voluntary sector infrastructure in Scotland work more efficiently, but more importantly, more effectively. The outcomes – the difference and changes – we hope to achieve are detailed over the following pages, but we hope to provide these outcomes by:

- investing in national 'third tier' organisations to help them improve their networks and enable them to engage more with other voluntary and equalities sector networks and organisations
- investing in voluntary and equalities sector intermediary organisations – those that support local, frontline voluntary and equalities groups and organisations, and which help them with their development – to carry out this function more efficiently and effectively, thereby making their networks and these frontline groups more effective too.

2. Strengthening community influence

We want to equip all kinds of communities with the skills, confidence and capacity to become much more involved in civic life, increasing their influence over the decisions that affect them. A wide range of voluntary and community organisations can play a role in helping communities find their voice. We will invest in proposals that enable communities to extend their influence over local, regional and national developments.

3. Strengthening the core – Supporting voluntary action – Our commitment to the CVS Network

We will invest substantially in the Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) network because we recognise its unique and vital role at the heart of the voluntary sector. We want to build on and extend the strengths of the network so that the best it has to offer is available to voluntary organisations in all parts of Scotland. We will therefore invest half of the £20 million available under Dynamic, Inclusive Communities (i.e. £10 million) in a strategic, co-ordinated programme of activity designed to improve the functioning and effectiveness of the CVS network as a whole, and increase and improve its engagement and collaboration with other voluntary and equalities sector networks throughout Scotland. The result we want to see is a voluntary sector infrastructure that is much more robust, joined-up and effective.

This specific, strategic programme is being co-ordinated by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) and will ensure a consistent, focused approach to developing the

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infrastructure, capacity and wider potential of the CVS network. It is being delivered separately to the rest of Dynamic, Inclusive Communities.

Because the strategic programme will address the collective needs of Councils for Voluntary Service via the CVS network as a whole, individual Councils cannot apply to Dynamic, Inclusive Communities for funding to improve how they operate or to increase their capacity. However, they can, in certain circumstances, apply to Dynamic, Inclusive Communities on behalf of communities that need help to gain skills and confidence to engage with and influence the statutory sector (see outcome 5). We will also welcome applications from CVSs to Investing in Ideas and the Life Transitions and Supporting 21st Century Life investment areas.

How much can you apply for?

Sums from £10,000 to £1 million are available for projects, and only exceptionally more than £1 million. We expect mainly to meet revenue costs through Dynamic, Inclusive Communities but we can also meet some capital costs. If you wish to apply for capital costs or more than £1 million, you must contact us before submitting your application. We will fund projects to run for up to five years and can meet 100 per cent of your project costs.

The following pages provide further guidance on our wider aims.

Front line (or first tier) voluntary, community and equalities organisations deliver services or give advice direct to individuals, people or communities, or campaign and advocate on a specific issue.

Intermediary (or second tier or infrastructure) voluntary and equalities organisations play a supporting, co-ordinating or development role within the voluntary sector. They serve and work directly with other voluntary and community sector organisations, and support front line or first tier voluntary, community and equalities organisations. Intermediaries operate at local, regional and national levels, and may provide support to all of the voluntary organisations in a particular geographical area, or all organisations targeting a similar issue or client group. The intermediaries therefore still have a direct interest in the issues which the front line organisations pursue or in their client groups.

Third tier voluntary organisations primarily support intermediary or second tier voluntary organisations.

Support service providers provide voluntary organisations with various services to support their core activities such as communication and information technology, evaluation or fundraising. However, they have no direct interest in the voluntary organisations' client groups.

What changes would we like to make?

We have outcomes, or long term changes, we want to see happening through our investment in Dynamic Inclusive Communities. Your project must show how it will achieve at least one of these outcomes. The specific changes we would like to see are:

Outcome 1 – Voluntary and community sector networks offer better, more consistent and wider-reaching services

We will invest in projects that improve the quality, range, reach, consistency and sustainability of services supplied by voluntary and equalities sector networks, intermediaries and infrastructure organisations so that the frontline voluntary organisations they support (i.e. those that work directly with people and communities) are able to access consistent, effective, high-quality support from the networks and intermediaries, wherever these organisations are based in Scotland, or whatever issue is being tackled.

Under this outcome, we expect to make grants to intermediary or 'second tier' voluntary and equalities organisations. Your application

should clearly demonstrate how you operate as one of these organisations and which network of frontline organisations you support. You should detail the sorts of services that you currently provide to frontline organisations and the geographical area that you cover. Thereafter, your application must clearly demonstrate how our funding will help you to develop the capacity and infrastructure of frontline organisations so that they can deliver high quality services and support.

Applicants might choose to achieve this outcome by, for example:

- adopting a quality assurance system to drive up service standards
- offering new or enhanced services in different geographical areas
- planning or re-designing services for the long-term.

Outcome 2 – Voluntary and community sector action is more vibrant, connected with communities and able to champion change

We will invest in projects that help voluntary and equalities sector networks, intermediaries and infrastructure organisations to ensure that the frontline organisations they support become better informed, connected and organised, and also more skilful, professional and effective in campaigning and influencing. The increased confidence and competence the frontline organisations will show as a result of this will improve their profile and relationships with their wider stakeholders (including the statutory sector), and enable them to campaign for their communities and set the agenda for wider society in Scotland.

It will also involve the networks and intermediaries in helping local voluntary, community and equalities groups to mobilise their communities to actively engage with decision makers and thereby deliver social change in these communities and for those people most in need.

Under this outcome, we expect to make grants to intermediary or

'second tier' voluntary and equalities organisations. Your application should clearly demonstrate how you operate as one of these organisations and which network of frontline organisations you support. You should detail the sorts of services that you currently provide to frontline organisations – specifically in relation to information sharing, networking, campaigning and influencing – and the geographical area that you cover. You should also tell us about how you help frontline organisations to stimulate interest and action in local communities. Thereafter, your application must clearly demonstrate how our funding will help you to develop quality and improved levels of competency in all of these activities amongst the frontline organisations that you support.

We will expect intermediary organisations to apply to do more than simply set up networks or carry out more networking between frontline organisations. We want them to provide a range of practical 'hands on' support to these organisations in the form of, for example, training, sharing best practice or working with them to identify growth opportunities.

Outcome 3 – Voluntary and community sector organisations are better managed, better governed and deliver better services

We will invest in projects that increase or extend the ability of national voluntary organisations, and voluntary and equalities sector networks, intermediaries and infrastructure organisations help frontline voluntary and community organisations:

- to improve the skills and capacity of their staff, board and committee members
- to develop and strengthen their organisational structures and operations
- to plan and deliver their services.

Under this outcome, we expect to make grants to intermediary or 'second tier' voluntary and equalities organisations. Your application should clearly demonstrate how you operate as one of these organisations and which network of frontline organisations you support. You should detail the sorts of services that you currently provide to frontline organisations

– specifically in relation to capacity building, organisational development, and service planning and delivery – and the geographical area that you cover. Thereafter, your application must clearly demonstrate how our funding will help you to improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the frontline organisations that you support.

Applicants may choose to deliver this support by, for example:

- auditing the skills possessed by staff and office bearers, then devising and delivering training to meet any gaps identified
- updating communications and information technology
- delivering governance training.

Outcome 4 – Improved equalities knowledge and practice across the voluntary and community sector

To ensure that equality is at the heart of every aspect of voluntary and community sector activity in Scotland, we will invest in projects that:

- improve the ability and capacity of equality sector networks and intermediaries to effectively promote equality
- help the rest of the voluntary and community sector in Scotland not only to operate and display the best equality practice, but also to continually promote this practice widely at a local level
- encourage much greater interaction between these two sectors.

We will make grants to various types of organisations under this outcome.

First, we expect to make grants to intermediary or 'second tier' equality organisations. Your application should clearly demonstrate how you operate as one of these organisations and which network of frontline organisations you support. You should detail the sorts of services

that you currently provide to frontline organisations – specifically in relation to equality – and the geographical area that you cover. Thereafter, your application must clearly demonstrate how our funding will help you to develop your ability and capacity to promote equality more effectively.

Second, we expect to make grants to intermediary or 'second tier' voluntary organisations. Your application should clearly demonstrate how you operate as one of these organisations and which network of frontline organisations you support. You should detail the sorts of services that you currently provide to frontline organisations – specifically in relation to equality – and the geographical area that you cover. Thereafter, your application must clearly demonstrate how our funding will help you to improve the level of knowledge about equality issues in frontline organisations and enable them to display and widely promote best practice at all times.

Outcome 5 – People and communities have more power over their lives and more say in decisions that are made about them

We will invest in projects that help people and communities develop the confidence, understanding, skills and capacity they need to become more actively involved in defining and tackling issues that concern and affect them. They can then use this confidence and their new skills and capacity to influence decision-making and service delivery so as to improve their quality of life. In certain circumstances, where people and communities have no background or little experience in these matters, we will fund a range of voluntary or community organisations to work with them to acquire the necessary skills. We will particularly welcome applications for projects from people and communities that have never done anything like this before or propose using new or innovative ways to enable people and communities to acquire these abilities and skills.

We want all of these activities to be undertaken in accordance with the

National Standards for Community Engagement (www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/lccs_008411.pdf).

Our aim is to enable people and local communities to acquire skills and capacity for themselves so that:

- they are less dependent on outside support to enable them to address the issues that concern them, but instead possess the necessary means to do this themselves; and
- they can then use these skills and their newly acquired capacity to address a range of issues in a variety of situations.

Projects which aim simply to hire consultants to undertake a piece of engagement either to or for a community will therefore not achieve this outcome.

Under this outcome, we expect to make grants to local voluntary, community and equalities organisations. Your application should clearly demonstrate how you will work with local people, groups and communities to develop the skills they need to become actively

involved in influencing the decision-making processes that affect them and the services they receive.

The outcomes section on pages 6–10 indicates the kinds of organisations we think are better placed – because of their structures, networks, remits or geographical coverage – to deliver the outcomes we want Dynamic, Inclusive Communities to achieve.

In all cases, applications should reflect the needs and aspirations of voluntary, community and equalities sector groups and organisations themselves. We will not fund applications from support service providers who wish to use our funding to address what they perceive to be shortcomings in these groups and organisations. However, voluntary and equalities sector groups and organisations can incorporate the cost of hiring support service providers in their applications, thereby strengthening their ability to achieve the outcomes set for this area of investment.

Focus your application

Your proposal should focus on the issues and activities that you choose. However, there are two particular areas that the Fund would like every application and project to address, namely equality and sustainable development.

Think about equality and the communities you serve

Equality and diversity are at the heart of all that the Fund does and we want the projects that we fund to do the same.

Your application will therefore be stronger if your project actively promotes equality. You must say in your application how your project can help achieve equality. The best way of going about this is to think about the different needs and barriers for different people at every stage of planning, delivering and evaluating your project.

Think about the different people who might use your project and involve them in your consultation or needs analysis. Think about where you hold events and the role models you use in promotional materials. Think about

who has a say over whether your project is viewed as a success.

You might be able to say something particularly positive, if your project for example:

- improves the confidence and capacity of organisations to engage and promote equality issues
- demonstrates practical and measurable ways in which equality issues and under-represented groups are incorporated into the way voluntary organisations plan and deliver their services in local areas
- improves the skills and knowledge of staff and volunteers to increase equality of opportunity
- increases civic participation by people less likely to be involved in decision-making or volunteering

- encourages diversity by encouraging young people, women, people from black and ethnic minority groups, disabled people and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people to become office bearers
- promotes social inclusion by extending services to groups and communities not reflected in current provision.

Think about sustainability and the environment

BIG is committed to the principle of sustainable development. Your project will be stronger if it shows how you too will contribute to sustainable development.

Sustainable development is about meeting the needs of today without affecting the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It is about balancing the desire to improve quality of life now and the need to preserve resources for the future. You must say in your application how your project can help achieve sustainable development.

When planning your project, think about how it affects the environment, how you intend to use resources such as paper. Think about energy efficiency of your building, about the impact that the goods and services you buy has on the environment. Ask if your events are accessible by public transport. Think about how your project strengthens the local economy: whether your project increases investment in the local area, whether you can reduce ongoing running and maintenance costs, and whether you support

services or businesses. Think about how your project meets social needs: how people are involved in your project and who benefits from any new employment opportunities.

You might be able to say something particularly positive if, for example, your project:

- promotes social enterprise, encourages voluntary and community organisations to think about their long-term future or builds a bank of skills for the future
- reduces the use of resources like paper and energy by using new information technology
- sports environmental, voluntary or community organisations.

Why we are investing in this area – the facts

- ▶ The voluntary sector makes a contribution to every area of community life in Scotland through an estimated 50,000 voluntary organisations, with around 119,000 paid staff and 1.2 million volunteers, and an annual turnover of £2.62 billion.
- ▶ Policies and services are more likely to be relevant and effective if the people and communities they serve are involved at an early stage in their development and design.
- ▶ National and local government recognise the value that voluntary organisations add to public services and community life and are committed to using the sector's skills and talents by involving it more in policy development, service design and delivery.
- ▶ The sector has a formal role in “participatory government” through Community Planning Partnerships, Community Health Partnerships, Regeneration Outcome Agreements and School Parent Forums and Councils.

We would like to invest in people and communities across Scotland to develop this potential and meet these challenges.

