

# Advice Services Transition Fund

Applications from partnerships

Additional guidance



## About partnerships

Partnerships enable organisations to pursue a common vision and work together to achieve more than they could by working on their own.

For this programme, a partnership must include a range of not-for-profit advice providers working across a second tier local authority area to provide services which reflect the full needs of the people and communities in that area. We expect this to include providers of welfare benefits, debt, housing and employment advice in the area. We will consider proposals for local partnerships that work in a different way (perhaps across a local authority boundary, or in smaller settlements within a single area) where applicants can demonstrate there is a clear benefit from that approach.

Although we are only able to fund not-for-profit organisations through this programme, you are welcome to include other types of organisation in your partnership on an unfunded basis where this strengthens your project.

The partnerships that we fund must be formal partnerships with their own partnership agreement. The structure will depend on the amount of control that the partners wish to have over the joint work. This in turn depends on the purpose of the partnership, the type of work to be carried out and the level of risk involved for each organisation.

## Applications from partnerships

A 'lead organisation' should submit the application to us on behalf of the partnership. This should be the organisation that will co-ordinate, manage and deliver the project. The lead organisation must meet our eligibility requirements for this programme. Any exceptions or restrictions are explained in our programme guidance notes.

We expect the lead organisation to follow its agreed procedures for obtaining goods and services, show value for money and meet any relevant European laws. If an open tender process is not appropriate for procuring goods and services, we need to know why, so that we may consider if this is the best way to deliver the project. If other organisations in the partnership will provide goods or services needed for the project then the lead organisation should explain the basis on which they have been chosen to do this.

If we decide to fund the project, we will enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the lead organisation. This organisation must accept our terms and conditions of grant and will be accountable to us for how all the money is spent.

## Partnership agreements

One of our standard terms and conditions of grant is that the organisation we enter into a grant agreement with cannot subcontract any of the project to other organisations without our prior agreement in writing. So if we award a grant, before the project can start we must approve a partnership agreement between the lead organisation and the other partners involved in the project.

If other partners will provide goods or services needed to deliver the project and achieve its outcomes, then this must be covered in detail in the partnership agreement. However, if the partnership will focus on areas such as encouraging closer understanding or sharing information but the project is not dependent on this to achieve its outcomes, the agreement can be less detailed.

In all cases the partnership agreement must ensure that the lead organisation can meet all our terms and conditions of grant, follow our National Lottery branding guidelines, provide us with all the financial, monitoring and any other information we require and deliver the project on time and within budget.

Our programme guidance notes explain whether we need a partnership agreement to be sent with the application or only if we offer a grant. If a partnership agreement is already in place we will need to check that it meets our requirements and we may require some changes.

The partnership agreement must cover a period that is at least as long as our grant agreement with the lead organisation. In some cases the period covered by the grant agreement will be longer than the duration of the project itself.

In all cases the partnership agreement must refer to, or include, our terms and conditions of grant. The partnership agreement must also state that if there is any conflict between the interpretation of our terms and conditions of grant and any others, ours will always take precedence.

## What should a partnership agreement include?

Since a wide range of partnership arrangements exist and every project will be different, we cannot provide detailed guidance. We recommend that partnerships seek their own legal advice.

To help clarify what needs to be included in a partnership agreement we suggest that the lead organisation goes through our standard terms and conditions of grant and decides which ones are relevant to each of the partners involved in delivering the project. This will help identify what needs to be included in the partnership agreement to enable the lead organisation to meet all our terms and conditions.

All the organisations in the partnership should also study our terms and conditions of grant carefully and agree what their responsibilities are and how they will carry them out.

We expect partnership agreements will cover the following points:

### Purpose or aim of the partnership

Explain how the aims and objectives of the partnership will contribute to achievement of the project outcomes.

### Who the lead organisation is

Make clear that the organisation that submits the application to us is the lead organisation for the purposes of any grant we award. Include a statement that the lead organisation will be solely responsible to us to deliver the project in accordance with our terms and conditions.

### Details of each partner organisation

State the names and addresses of all the organisations that are signing up to the agreement. Include details of key contacts.

### **Financial and contractual arrangements**

If a partner organisation will supply goods or services as part of the project then include details of what will be delivered, how often, what the method of payment will be and when payments will be made. We cannot be responsible for payments to partner organisations. This responsibility lies with the lead organisation. Include a statement that the lead organisation will be responsible for all funds received from us and will not be liable to make payments to a partner organisation until they have received our grant payments. The lead organisation must keep records of all project expenditure and be able to provide evidence of spending to us if we ask for it.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

Explain the main roles and responsibilities of each organisation in the partnership. Make clear which tasks and services each partner will be responsible for delivering.

### **Policies and procedures**

Include all that are required by law or relevant to the project, such as health and safety, equal opportunities and the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

### **Administration, meetings and record keeping**

Explain who is responsible for setting up meetings, how often they will happen and what records will be kept.

### **Monitoring and reporting**

Explain how monitoring information will be provided by the partner organisations throughout the period of the grant agreement to enable the lead organisation to complete regular progress reports for us.

### **Communication**

Make clear how often the project will be discussed by the partnership and by what methods, for example, face-to-face meetings, phone or email. Make it clear who will be responsible for promoting the project through the media and who will handle enquiries.

### **Branding**

This must be in accordance with our guidelines, including use of the National Lottery 'Crossed Fingers' logo.

### **Changes to the agreement**

Explain how changes to the agreement or disputes will be managed and resolved. Remember that a disagreement between the partners might mean that the lead organisation will not be able to meet our grant terms and conditions.

### **Duration of the agreement**

This should include the provision for the lead organisation to terminate the agreement if for any reason we need to suspend or terminate our grant.

### **Approach to sustainability**

Explain how the benefits of the partnership will be sustained beyond the period of our funding.

### **Signed declaration**

All partners must sign the agreement.

These are the main areas we expect to be covered but there may be extra requirements included in our individual programme guidance notes.