

Fulfilling Lives: Ageing Better

Questions & Answers

25 March 2013

1 What is the main purpose of the Fulfilling Lives: Ageing Better investment?

The main purpose of Fulfilling Lives: Ageing Better is to support older people who are marginalised or most at risk of social isolation and loneliness so that they can lead more fulfilling lives.

The Big Lottery Fund has made up to £70 million available for the Fulfilling Lives Ageing Better initiative. We expect to make awards of between £2 million and £6 million to between 15 and 20 areas, over a three to six year period.

2 What do you mean by 'Older'?

Our older people's strategy in England describes older people (OP) as anyone over the age of 50. This description applies to all of our older people's investments in England.

3 What do you mean by 'socially isolated'?

By socially isolated we mean older people who might live alone or have no support networks. This might be the result of poor health, bereavement, or geography, but these are just examples: there is a range of reasons why older people become socially isolated.

Stage one - Expressions of Interest

4 How were the 100 local authority areas selected for expressions of interest?

We will invite 100 local authority areas (districts, boroughs and unitary) to submit an Expression of Interest form (EOI). Only local authorities can submit this form and only one will be accepted from each local authority area.

There are a number of different factors which are shown to increase the risk of older people becoming isolated, including:

- Personal circumstances such as living alone, being single, divorced, or never married
- Personal characteristics such as being aged 75+ plus
- from an ethnic minority community, gay or lesbian
- later life events including bereavement, retirement, developing care needs or becoming a carer

We have chosen the 100 local authority areas based on a combination of the proportion of older people who experience these risk factors, and the general proportion of older people living within those areas.

5 Why are only 100 areas being asked to submit an EOI?

As this is a strategic investment we felt it would be disproportionate to ask all LA areas to express an interest and the success rates wouldn't be very high. We have identified 100 areas where the risk factors related to social isolation of older people are the highest. This will avoid many areas that were unlikely to be successful spending time completing applications.

6 Why are there more urban areas than rural areas in the 100 eligible local authority areas?

When identifying the 100 areas most in need, we considered risk factors associated with the social isolation of older people and each area was given a rating based on these risk factors. We then took the top 100 areas as those most in need of funding through this investment. The statistics have shown that the associated risk factors are more prevalent in urban areas.

7 Why are some of the 100 areas eligible for this funding also eligible for other strategic investments, such as Complex Needs?

The various strategic investments which have been launched are all targeting different people across society. Our overriding principle is that funding should reach those most in need. As the targeted beneficiaries for the investments are different, we have not discounted areas based on other funding available to them.

8 Why was no additional weighting afforded to rural areas to increase the number of rural areas in the 100?

Using the most significant risk factors associated with socially isolated older people meant that we were able to identify those who are most in need of funding through this programme. Using artificial weightings for rural areas in addition to our data might have diluted the reach of the programme.

9 Can an area not identified within the 100 work in partnership with one of the 100 areas to apply for funding?

No. The only areas which can apply for funding are those identified within the 100 eligible areas. We do encourage partnership working and should any of the 100 areas wish to work in partnership with each other this would be welcomed.

10 What information is required from each local authority?

Each Local Authority area will need to tell us about the older people in their area and demonstrate their understanding of the needs and location of the older people at risk. They will also need to use their knowledge and experiences of past and current service users (older people) to tell us how they would improve the way services are run and outline their ongoing role and commitment in the process of improving services on offer.

11 How will the EOI forms be used?

We will use the EOI process to assess the need in each area, the strength of the cross sector partnership, in particular the buy-in from the local authority, to judge their overall commitment to improving services for older people in their area.

12 Who will decide which 30 areas are selected?

A panel consisting of people with expertise in the issues affecting older people, and members of the BIG Lottery Fund's England Committee will select 30 local authority areas from the 100 to receive a development grant and practical support to produce a vision and strategy plan.

13 What level of engagement with older people is expected at the EOI stage?

The EOI stage does not expressly require engagement or consultation with older people. However, we do expect the EOI to have identified a range of public, private, voluntary and older people voice groups who are likely to have a desire to be involved and take a leading role moving forwards.

The EOI is an opportunity for local authorities to share with us their desire for their area to be considered for funding and to inform us of the current priorities and challenges in the area.

14 What is the closing date for the submission of EOI?

The closing date for submission of EOI forms is 17 May 2013.

Stage 2 - Vision and Strategy Plan

15 Who needs to submit the Vision and Strategy plan?

The vision and strategy must be submitted by a Voluntary or Community Sector (VCS) organisation. Each area must form a partnership led by a VCS organisation. This organisation will be our main point of contact on behalf of the partnership.

We will only accept one application from a lead VCS organisation within each of the 30 selected local authority areas. They can apply for development funding and will be required to submit a Vision and Strategy for their area in a bid to secure an in principle award.

16 Why are Local Authorities being asked to submit the EOI if the projects are to be VCS led?

To manage EOIs received, as we only require one EOI from each selected area. The local authority can inform us of the recent and upcoming challenges for their area in relation to the investment. It is the responsibility of each area to identify and nominate the best placed group to lead any investment.

17 How much can projects apply for?

We expect to make awards between £2 million and £6 million over three to six years. Up to 15 - 20 local authority areas will be selected to receive full funding.

We expect applicants to request grant sizes that will allow them to address local needs in their area, realise their vision, while also reflecting a strong commitment to efficiency, value for money and sustainability.

18 Will there be a ceiling on the level of funding that can be allocated towards the running of the project

We have not set a specific guideline about management costs for this programme. In your application you will be asked to justify how any funding will be spent; for example, you will be asked to indicate the level of management costs you require and why.

We expect proposals to represent good value for money with as much funding as possible to be spent on things that directly help beneficiaries.

There is a guide to our policy on full cost recovery here:
http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/pub_full_cost_recovery.pdf

19 Does partnership or match-funding need to be secured?

We can fund some or all of your project costs. Although match funding isn't a requirement on this programme, we encourage you to get some of your funding from other sources, including partners, if you can. This helps to show a wide range of support for your project and may help it to be more sustainable.

If you are invited to the next stage you will be expected to submit a project plan, you will need to provide evidence of joint funding or an 'in principle' approval for any joint funding you have obtained, or evidence that applications for partnership funding have been made and decision dates established.

20 Can part of the money be spent on capital?

We expect the majority of funding to be for revenue costs used for funding staff posts, training and activities within your area etc. There will be a small amount available for capital items such as capital equipment, specialist vehicles or small scale refurbishment that is absolutely essential to the delivery of the project. You will be expected to set out in your Vision and Strategy the levels of capital that you require and what it is for and why.

21 What partnership working arrangements are required and who should be included?

The partnership needs to be led by a VCS organisation. We expect each area partnership to be made up of public, private and other VCS organisations as a minimum. Each partnership will need to demonstrate they are cross-sector and representative of the range of organisations working with older people in the selected target areas. We also expect older people to play an active role in leading the partnership working closely with the lead VCS, through genuine involvement in the design and ongoing delivery of the project.

22 What do you mean by voluntary and community sector (VCS)?

This initiative will only fund partnerships led by a voluntary and community sector organisation that is established in England. By voluntary and community sector organisations we mean registered charities, charitable or not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises (businesses where profits are mainly re-invested for community benefit).

Statutory or profit-making organisations can be included in the partnership that delivers the project but they cannot be the lead organisation.

23 Does the lead organisation in a project have to have a track record in the local area?

We have made no assumptions about the size of the lead organisation; they may be new or existing - the key is to have a strong track record of supporting older people in the local area and to have the capacity and systems in place to manage a grant of this size.

Where there is no suitable lead organisation with a track record of working with this group, an alternative VCS lead organisation could be proposed, but the partnership overall would still need to demonstrate the strength of their track record and experience. The lead VCS body will need to demonstrate how their local partnership supports them in the role.

24 Will applications from Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV) or Consortiums be accepted?

We are unable to accept an application from a consortium. 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. 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. In turn the lead partner can enter into formal partnerships with other organisations through a partnership agreement.

You could consider setting up a Special Purpose Vehicle, but these are often lengthy and complex to establish and you are advised to seek legal advice. It is unlikely that one could be established within our application timescales. We would need to conduct an assessment of any new entity that was created in the future before being able to transfer legal responsibility to it.

25 What about projects that cross local authority boundaries?

Projects can cross local authority (LA) boundaries. Only one statutory body needs to be involved in the partnership but we strongly advise that you secure support of all relevant local authorities and involve them in plans for disseminating and sharing learning.

26 Can my organisation be the lead applicant for a number of bids?

No. You can only be the lead applicant for one bid. However you can be part of the partnership of more than one bid. We expect to fund local partnerships with a strong understanding of local needs and established roots into local communities. Projects that do not possess local knowledge and understanding are unlikely to be funded through this initiative.

27 Are there any audit parameters or due diligence that you will undertake for the programme lead partners?

Yes - we will follow our normal procedures and as the grant could be for up to £6 million, the lead partner will need to have sufficient infrastructure and governance procedures in place for us to be satisfied that our funding will not be placed under undue or unacceptable levels of risk. We will judge and assess the suitability of the lead partner once it has been identified.

28 What support is available for the development of a partnership?

To get partnerships started, we shall be offering up to £20,000 partnership development funding to the 30 selected VCS organisations in the first instance, as part of a wider support package.

29 How can older people be involved in the process?

Older people must play a genuine and ongoing role in the partnership. Older people should be central in all key decisions that affect them, through membership on panels that predominately comprise older people. These panels should also include inter-generational representatives of the wider community.

30 How long will VCS organisation have to develop their vision and strategy?

Organisation will have up to 5 months to develop their vision and strategy plans.

31 What support is available to VCS organisations to develop their Vision and Strategy and project plans?

A support and development contract will be put in place for the 30 areas to access evidence based expertise to support the development of plans. Support and development team will assist each area in identifying gaps and developing their vision and strategy and project plans if they are awarded an in principle award. A development grant of up to £20k will also be available through application.

32 How will you ensure that Older People in each area are involved throughout the application process?

We expect each area to actively engage older people in shaping the investment at all stages, including the application stage. We will provide some existing good practice guides around engaging older people in our guidance materials, but it will be the responsibility of each area to demonstrate and evidence how older people have been engaged throughout the process. This evidence will be taken into account in our assessment of applications.

33 How will the vision and strategy plan be used?

The 30 vision and strategy documents will be used to enable the decision making committee to choose the strongest 15-20 projects to make an in principle award to, subject to the submission of a full and detailed project plan. We are looking to make awards to up to 20 projects that offer a range of learning opportunities.

34 Who will select the final vision and strategy to receive funding?

The successful projects will be chosen by BIG's England Committee.

Stage 3 - In Principle Award

35 How much funding is available to develop project plan?

If we agree in principle to fund a project based on a Vision and Strategy, we will pay up to £50,000 from the in principle grant up front to help with working up the detail of a project plan.

36 How long will VCS organisation have to develop their project plans?

Organisation will have up to 5 months to develop their project plans.

37 Will being part of this partnership adversely affect a group's potential to apply for other sources of funding from BIG?

No - however, the activities for which you request funding must be different from what you are already receiving funding for.