

Updated 17 September 2013

Will the Big Lottery Fund look for the 32 shortlisted areas to link/ work together i.e. to share best practice?

As the vision and strategy stage is a competitive process we would not require or expect the 32 areas to share any best practice. However, once the final 15-20 areas are identified sharing of learning and best practice will be facilitated through the evaluation and support and development work. Learning will also be shared nationally (to areas not funded) through evaluation work and the work of the Centre for Ageing Better.

How will the Support and Development & Evaluation Contractors look to engage with the 32 areas and will the areas receive different level of support?

As the tender process for these contracts is ongoing, details regarding specific engagement mechanisms are still to be defined. The contractors will offer support to all 32 areas, however as the Vision and Strategy stage is competitive, initially each of areas will be offered the same “package” of support activities, it is at their discretion if they undertake these however. Once the final 12-15 areas have been identified, more tailored support will be offered based upon the specific requirements of each area.

How should the 32 areas look to manage expectations within the areas given that some will be unsuccessful?

While areas might not be successful in securing funding, the partnership links that are developed and lessons learned through the assessment stage can still be used to for the benefit of each area, for example to support access to other sources of funding.

Will the successful areas be able to undertake their own “self evaluation” in addition to the wider evaluation activity?

Yes, some of the funding received can be allocated for this purpose.

Is there any expectations regarding the role of the local authority in activities going forward and in particular with regards to the relationship between the Lead VCS organisation and the Local Authority?

The fund has no requirements regarding the role of the Local Authority in activities or their relationship with the lead organisation. However partnerships would benefit from a continued relationship with the local authority for example in ensuring that partnership activities fit with local policy (or that policy is shaped by lessons learned from activities)

Can the lead VCS organisation be a Housing Association or Community Interest Company?

We would welcome applications from both of the above organisation types. However, if you are a Housing Association or CIC, we would advise that you consult our guidance on eligible

organisations on our website and that you seek an independent legal opinion to ensure that you are eligible to apply.

Updated 21 August 2013

How do we regard Age UK in the selection process of partners?

Given the nature of their work and their national presence we are happy for Age UK to form part of any areas partnerships. However it is entirely up to each partnership to identify the most appropriate organisations to form part of their partnership and the nature of their roles within.

Could a new organisation be a partnership lead?

Yes, as long as the organisation is able to evidence that they meet the criteria set out in our guidance notes they will be eligible to be a lead organisation.

Have the Big Lottery fund seen an innovative or out the box method used to select a lead organisation previously that has been successful? / Do you have any suggestions about how a lead org has chosen; is there any learning to share from other projects?

Partnerships should ensure that their process for identifying a lead organisation is as open and inclusive as possible, other than this there are no specific selection methods that are preferred. The selection process used is entirely up to the discretion of each area partnership.

Would Big Lottery Fund like to be on the panel to help choose the lead organisation?

No, the big lottery fund can only provide guidance on the criteria that the lead organisation must meet, it is for the partnerships themselves to identify their lead organisation, and the specific role they will play.

What do we want from the lead organisation?

The Fund only requires the lead organisation to meet criteria set out in our guidance notes, it is for each individual area to set out the overall roles and responsibilities of each member of their partnership, including the lead VCS, that best enables the partnership to meet their objectives.

Although the guidance states that a local area be defined, could an application cover a whole local authority area?

Yes, project activities can cover the whole of your local authority area, or specific sub region or sub groups within the area. It is up to your partnership to guide us as to how your approach was identified and why it is the most appropriate focus for your area.

How do BIG define older people?

We define an older person as anyone aged 50 or above.

Is there any recommendation from Big Lottery Fund re: core partnership numbers?

We are unable to provide guidance regarding partnership numbers or make up, as requirements will differ depending on the makeup of the area. Instead it is up to your area to evidence that your partnership includes the most appropriate organisations.

Can we use any of the £20k to fund a post to develop the partnership?

We can fund items as long as they fit within the overall purpose of developing the partnership and its vision and strategy for the overall project, a specific post to develop the partnership would fit within this criteria.

If we are part of an Ageing Better partnership will this prevent us from accessing other sources of lottery funding?

No, organisations that are part of an Ageing Better partnership will still be able to apply for other sources of funding, although they will not be able to apply for funding for activities that are being undertaken within the area as part of the Ageing Better initiative. E.g. members of the partnership could apply to our Reaching Communities programme for up to £500K each for separate projects.

How were the organisation selected to come to the Partnership Planning events. Is it too late for an organisation not attending today's event to still get involved, and how?

In the first instance, invitations were sent to organisations identified as part of initial partnership within your area's EOI. Further invites were then sent to organisations that were identified by the local authority and our own Regional teams. These events are considered just a starting point, and partnerships should not be limited to only those organisations who attended. It is up to each area to consider which organisations should be part of a partnership going forward based on their knowledge of the area. Organisations wishing to engage with a partnership should currently contact the LA council who will support their engagement.

What do we mean by sustainability with regards to the investment, how key a factor is this?

Sustainability may take many forms for example learning from the project and the findings of our evaluation can be used to inform development of activities and services in both area of funding and other areas of the UK. This could support any future lobbying for funding from a variety of sources including local government, particularly if cost saving are demonstrable. Additionally, the links that are developed between partnership organisations and any new service groups developed will be of long term benefit to each area and shared service delivery could continue beyond the life of the funding.

Some free or low cost services such as volunteer befrienders etc that could be established through the project could also continue after our funding has ended, others may need to be scaled down but still would benefit the community.

Updated 14 August 2013

How much can areas 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. With the work being undertaken to complete the vision and strategy document, it should become clearer how much funding will be required for the areas.

When do we decide how much money we should ask for?

The partnership development funding form which is submitted in November identifies the amount of development funding that your partnership requires, you can request up to £20k at this stage. The vision and strategy document submitted in April 2014 identifies the size of the award that you would require to deliver your project should you be selected.

If successful, is the allocated grant only to be used for voluntary organisations to deliver or can the award be used for public services/local authority delivery?

The funding cannot replace any statutory requirements to deliver services. You should clearly demonstrate that any activity is additional to statutory requirements. Provided the activity is additional it can be delivered by any member of the partnership. It is for the partnership to identify the best way to spend the grant funding which could include through public bodies.

What will the upcoming Planning Meetings be about?

The meetings are an opportunity to bring together key potential partners in each area. We will be facilitating discussions around engagement with older people, how strong partnerships work and other discussion points. We will also be giving you a feel for our vision and ambition for the investment.

Will there be further documentation about the role, responsibilities and expectations of the lead organisation?

The lead organisation is expected to be able to manage the funds and lead the partnership through writing the vision and strategy and the delivery of the project should they receive full funding. Details about the type of organisation that we can fund can be found on our website (www.biglotteryfund.org.uk). Your partnership should define the roles and responsibilities of the lead VCS and their core and delivery partners. Further discussion on this will be taking place at the meetings being hosted. Your funding officer will also be able to guide and support your area through the selection of the lead VCS should you require it.

Will small voluntary sector organisations be able to claim financial help for any extra work their workers/volunteers take on?

We will be awarding development grants of up to £20k which is available to all 32 LA areas. We will make full awards of up to £6m to between 15 and 20 LA areas. It is the responsibility of the lead VCS and partnership to ensure that the partners have the funds and the capacity to deliver their project and partners of all sizes and sectors should be involved with this

process. Additional funding will not be provided outside of the development grant and the full award should your area be successful.

What defines an "Older People's Voice" group?

An older people's voice group is an organisation or group of older people who share their thoughts and ideas to influence the design, delivery and impact of activities in their area that relate to older people and their community. Often it is set up as a forum in the area. We have used this wording to enable your area to structure how it works with older people and enables them to lead and inform the project rather than our being too prescriptive.

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

We have not set specific guideline about management costs for this programme. In your Vision and Strategy document 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. You can find guidance on how to calculate management costs and overheads on our website at www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/funding-guidance/applying-for-funding/full-costrecovery.

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

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 32 areas to access evidence based expertise to support the development of plans. The scope of support that will be provided at each stage of the process is still being developed, but we do anticipate some support being available at this stage. A development grant of up to £20k will also be available through application.

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.

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

Organisation will have around 5 months to develop their project plans after the approval of their Vision and Strategy, should they be in the final 15 to 20 areas.

What is the partnership development grant for?

Only the lead organisation from each partnership in the 32 shortlisted local authority areas should complete and submit this form. The lead organisation should be from the voluntary and community sector and there should only be one partnership in each shortlisted area. We do expect all partners to feed into and agree the contents of the Vision and Strategy.

The partnership development funding can pay for items such as venue hire, additional administration costs, expenses for people to attend meetings and the costs of communicating and consulting with partners and stakeholders. This is not an exhaustive list,

and we expect to fund many different costs, but the overall purpose must be to develop the partnership and its vision and strategy for the overall project. To help our funds go as far as possible, we want to see partner organisations offering support, expertise and pooling their resources where possible.

Are BIG expecting local authorities to be the gathering contact details for the Partnership Meeting?

We are working with the Local Authority to identify the most suitable people to invite to the events. We have asked the main contact at the Local Authority to send us the contact details for people already named on the EOI and further people will be invited beyond this initial list. We will use this information and send invitations from our central database. Where the number of people wanting to attend the meeting exceeds the limit we will work with the Local Authority, using our own local knowledge, to invite the key partners. We would expect those in attendance to inform and work with other organisations that may not have been able to attend.

Is there a draft agenda for the upcoming partnership meeting?

The agenda for the Partnership Meeting will provide you with opportunities to listen to our vision for the investment and to talk about how to identify a lead VCS organisation, how to engage with socially isolated older people and other priorities in across your area. An agenda will be provided on the day.

If we submit the partnership form before 8th Nov, will you assess it sooner than December?

We may assess it earlier but all decisions will be made by our Committee in December.

Are you expecting to fund all 32 areas to develop their vision and strategy?

All 32 areas are in a position to apply for a development grant and this will be a part of the partnership development funding form that is due to submission on 8th November. Provided the funding requested is suitable and our committee agree that an appropriate lead VCS has been identified all 32 areas are in a position to receive development funding. We are looking to identify 15-20 out of the 32 areas following the assessment of the vision and strategy document which is to be submitted in April 2014.

Would partnerships be able to start work on developing the vision and strategy before you approve the lead organisation?

Whilst you can start working on your V&S before the lead organisation is selected, you wouldn't receive any development grant funding for activity you've already undertaken.

Is there going to be a draft agenda or timetable for the partnership sessions so we can prepare partners for what will be included?

The agenda for the Partnership Meeting will provide you with opportunities to listen to our vision for the investment as well as providing you opportunities to talk about how to identify a lead VCS organisation, how to engage with socially isolated older people and other priorities in across your area. An agenda will be provided on the day. Depending on the location meetings will either start at 10am or 11am and last for around 4.5 hours. The meetings are an opportunity to bring together key potential partners in each area. We will be facilitating discussions around engagement with older people, how strong partnerships work and how to

identify a lead VCS organisation. We will also be giving you a feel for our vision and ambition for the investment overall.

Could joint bids across more than one local authority area be submitted?

Areas can submit a joint bid but it must be with one of the 32 shortlisted areas only.

Is the grant agreement with the lead organisation only or do other stakeholders sign up?

The lead VCS organisation is legally responsible for any funding that is awarded and is accountable to us for this. However, it is expected that they work with the partnership to ensure that it is spent in a suitable way for the area. All interested stakeholders and potential partners should assist in identifying the lead VCS and what their own role could be within the partnership. As I am sure you are aware partners can play a range of roles, core partners, delivery partners, etc and should your area receive funding through the investment we would expect a Partnership Agreement to be drawn up.

Will your criteria be transparent in terms of what you are assessing?

In terms of the partnership development funding form we will be considering the strengths of the selected lead VCS, how they have been identified (fair, open process) and how the partnership has come together so far. We will also be considering how any requested development funding is to be used. In terms of the vision and strategy document we will be considering how you have worked with older people to develop the document, what the need in the area is for example. All of our judgements and assessments are based around the questions that you are asked. For the vision and strategy assessment we will also carry out a telephone or visit assessment to ensure that the partnership has a full opportunity to share their ideas with us.

Would the lead partner provide the partnership agreement, or will BIG provide this?

Each area will have to develop their own partnership agreements which we will review and confirm meet the required standard or request further details on. Of course, we will be on hand to support and guide you and your partners through this process.

Do you have advice on how to involve older people in planning, design and delivery of projects?

We expect older people to be involved in all aspects of design and delivery of the project. How each area does this is up to the partnership. Considering what networks and partners you already have in your area could be a starting point, but you will also need to think about how to engage with hard to reach older people, especially those who are socially isolated. This will be different for all areas.

Is there a process defined for choosing a lead or recommended process?

We are not prescribing a process to be used for identifying a lead VCS organisation. We acknowledge that all areas will be coming from a different starting point and will be on hand to support and/or advice as required. A lot of time at your areas event will be dedicated to you talking with your potential partners working through identifying a lead VCS, how to do it and how to work as a partnership, but we do expect areas to start these conversations before the event.

What role is anticipated for Local Authorities once VCS lead has been identified?

We would hope that the local authority would be a member of and support the partnership that is developed for the area. Within the original EOI the Local Authority was asked to discuss how they would support any partnerships in their area and we would hope that they fulfil the support that they discussed within, this could include providing resources, data, staff time, linking with other public partners etc. It would be up to the partnership as a whole how this would work and whether the LA would be considered as a senior partner. This could differ across partnerships and areas.

What if changes to costings make the cost greater than originally asked for? How much leeway is there?

If you were to be successful, you would receive the amount awarded by our Committee. However, we can be flexible in supporting you if changes in funding need to be made across budget lines but we would not be in a position to increase the grant amount as there is only a set amount of funding available for us to allocate. We would expect you to explore options such as match funding if you were experiencing a shortfall in funds or to adapt your plans. Over a 6 year investment, we expect that things may change and we are here to support you through this should you be successful

If the full bid includes multiple strands of work, and the full bid cost is rejected, will one or more of the strands still be eligible to go on with the bid at the vision and strategy stage?

This very much depends on your bid and how you have justified the activities that you propose, the cost for them, the need for them etc. The vision and strategy document will be assessed as a whole document and recommendation made to our committee. Our committee will then decide whether or not to fund your project, they may choose to fund a part of a project or may ask for more information to be submitted before a decision is made. We would expect your bid to cover multiple strands of work and demonstrate how you will work to meet the programme outcomes through these pieces of work.

What exactly is the role of the lead organisation?

The lead VCS organisation could be selected because of their experience in partnership work, engagement with older people, or managing large grants. It is the responsibility of the partnership to identify the strengths of the lead VCS and ensure that other partners compliment the role of the lead VCS. It is for the partnership to decide how this will work best in the area. There may then be other core partners that work most closely with them, and other organisations that feed in on certain elements. Each area can define how they wish to approach this.

Where do we find details of the tendering process for selecting a support and development partner?

Further details of the tendering process for the Support and Development contract will be made available on our website during late August/early September. Details around the procurement of the evaluation can already be found on our website, www.biglotteryfund.org.uk.

Where can we find the Silver Dreams Fund blog? It would be interesting to see the success of the first strand of funding for older people.

The blog can be found at <http://silverdreamsblog.wordpress.com/> where you can view all individual project blogs

