

Building Better Opportunities Worcestershire

Briefing June 2015



Big Lottery Fund Publishes Building Better Opportunities Guide

The Big Lottery Fund has recently published a programme guide on how the Building Better Opportunities Programme will operate when it opens for funding this summer and a Guide to delivering European Funding. Please see following link www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/esf

As previously reported, the Building Better Opportunities (BBO) programme brings together funding of approximately £440 million from the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund (ESF) to help tackle the poverty and social exclusion faced by the most disadvantaged people in England. The funding is expected to be available over the next four years, starting from summer 2015.

The money is being divided among 39 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas, including the Worcestershire LEP. Each LEP has a strategy for how the money will be spent and the number of projects and the amount of funding will vary according to the LEP area.

Organisations interested in applying for funding should check the priorities for their area by clicking on the relevant LEP link on the map located on the Big Lottery Fund website (see above link).

Projects are expected to be delivered by partnerships and lead organisations should have:

- A clear vision for responding to the priorities of the local area, supported by appropriate expertise.
- A proven track record of managing complex projects, relative to the size of any partnership and the money involved.
- Good connections for ensuring a wide cross section of organisations are able to get involved.
- Strategies for managing and coordinating any partnership throughout the planning, set-up and delivery of the project.

Applications will need to respond to one of the project outlines which describe each specific funding opportunity available through the programme and sets out what each project aims to achieve, and the areas or groups of people that it needs to target. Funding will only be available for one project per project outline.



Although each project outline will be different, there are five key principles that unite them. Projects must:

- **Help the most disadvantaged** - some groups of people are more disadvantaged than others when it comes to finding work and it is these individuals that Building Better Opportunities aspires to help.
- **Tackle social exclusion** - rather than just treating the symptoms, projects must help address the root causes of poverty and exclusion that are barriers to an individual seeking work.
- **Be focused on the capabilities of each individual** - projects are expected to build on people's strengths by developing their skills and talents to help them overcome the challenges they face.
- **Lead to better coordinated services** - in the main, services will need to be delivered in partnership between organisations that already have expertise in working with those most in need.
- **Create new opportunities for work** - it is therefore essential that there is engagement with employers to ensure there are pathways for people to progress into work.

There will be a two-stage application process. Stage one is fully open and competitive. Applicants who are successful at this stage will be invited to go to stage two. Support teams will be available to help organisations as they develop their stage two plans.

Partnership Working

As a result of the Worcestershire BBO events in the spring, there is a great deal of interest from across Worcestershire to be involved in delivering this activity. There is a recognition that smaller organisations need to be part of larger partnerships due to the size of the contracts being awarded.

In a previous newsletter, we asked that as part of the process of raising awareness and promoting BBO, those interested in leading a partnership with other local organisations, provide us with their contact details so they can be shared through a further newsletter. We had details of one emerging partnership and these were shared in May 2015 newsletter (repeated below).

Time is running short and if you wish to use this newsletter to contact others who have shown an interest in Building Better Opportunities, please can you let us have any details by June 10th 2015 so we can issue a further newsletter.

Please email: bbo@vestia.org.uk



Fusion

Fusion is the name for a Social and Economic Inclusion Consortium that is being developed by the main Worcestershire Housing Providers with input from other Voluntary Community Sector Organisations (VCSO).

Since 2014, a wider group of partners have been discussing the development of a Worcestershire VCS Consortium, with Vikki Greenfield, Vestia Head of Learning & Development, taking a lead in supporting the group to develop a model. Vestia is part of The Community Housing Group.

In January 2015, the Consortium adopted the name 'Fusion' and the Housing Providers have taken a lead in gathering data and developing a quality framework to prepare the Consortium to be 'bid ready' for ESIF and future opportunities. The Housing Providers are: Bromsgrove District Housing Trust, Fortis Living, Nexus Housing, Bromsgrove & Redditch Borough Council (Redditch Housing Department), Rooftop and Wyre Forest Community Housing.

If you would like further information please email: fusion@vestia.org.uk.

