

West Sussex Support Programme for Social Enterprises
Social Enterprise Fund (SEF) 2014-2015

Social Enterprise Early Stage Development Grant [Stream 1]

GUIDELINES

These guidelines are for the 2014/15 funding round and were published in June 2014.

Since 2005 WSCC has worked closely with key stakeholders in the county, the South East and nationally to provide support to social enterprises. WSCC has been working closely with partners from the Third Sector to ensure cooperation and efficient use of resources. WSCC funds and works with the West Sussex Social Enterprise Network (WSSSEN) to deliver support initiatives.

THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE FUND 2014-2015

This year the SEF is offering **two streams of grant funding** as a means of investing in the social enterprise sector for the longer term. These are:

- **Social Enterprise Early Stage Development Grant** to support social enterprise at earlier stages of development. [Stream 1]
- **Social Enterprise Main Grant scheme** for social enterprises at the point of delivery of new products or services. [Stream 2]

You can apply for either Stream 1 or Stream 2, not for both.

These guidelines relate to the Social Enterprise Early Stage Development Grant [Stream 1].

For guidance about the **Social Enterprise Main Grant scheme 2014-15 [Stream 2]** please see separate guidelines available from www.wssen.org.uk.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE EARLY STAGE DEVELOPMENT GRANT

Up to £50,000 is available to fund organisations that want to undertake a piece of work to explore their idea for social enterprise.

Amount of grant

The maximum grant that may be awarded to an individual or organisation is £5,000.

Purpose This grant scheme is to help individuals and organisations who have an idea for a social enterprise business and who wish to explore and investigate this further to be able to assess whether it is a viable business proposition. Any

proposal must be a business idea linked to clear social objectives. We anticipate that the fund will support a wide range of proposals.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following are eligible to apply:

- Social enterprises
- Charities and other organisations from the community and voluntary sector
- Organisations from the private sector
- Individuals

We expect proposals that will address the following criteria:

- The proposal is to test out an idea for social enterprise that will generate an income from selling a product or a service¹.

Examples: This could include: to gather evidence in order to assess the possibility of reaching new markets; to undertake activities to market test a new product; to explore and design what would be required operationally to deliver a new product or service; to develop an idea using external expertise e.g. for a new retail operation; to explore design options for delivery of a new service; to market test a new training service; to investigate whether there is evidence of a gap in the market for a product or service and whether there is a potential market and customer base. This list is not exhaustive and we welcome a range of proposals.

- The proposal will help you or your organisation to develop your idea to be able to assess whether it is a viable social enterprise business proposition.
- The idea will demonstrate clear benefits to the community and the environment in West Sussex.
- The idea will plan to deliver products or services in West Sussex
- In the longer term the social enterprise will demonstrate how it will create jobs and/or apprenticeships and/or training and skills development opportunities to contribute to a successful economy in West Sussex.
- **Only one proposal** will be accepted from each organisation or individual whether it is submitted individually or in consortium with others.
- **Application form:** Applicants are asked to complete a signed Application Form. All sections must be completed within the word limit.
- **Regulation and insurance:** If the delivery of the work involves working with people under 18, and/or with vulnerable adults, you must ensure you have appropriate insurance and policies, and that DBS checks are in place.
- The proposal and the plan to deliver it must **conform with all applicable laws** and regulations, for example employment law and insurance requirements.
- **Using the grant:** It is the responsibility of the organisation or individual submitting a proposal to ensure that the money is spent in a way and for purposes which are lawful and proper and reflect well on your organisation's reputation and that of WSSCC.

¹ For information about social enterprise definitions and characteristics see WSSSEN factsheets downloadable at www.wssen.org.uk

- **Total costs** - If your total costs exceed the amount you are applying for from the SEF, you need to explain that you have secured any additional funding required.
- WSCC is not able to discuss applications or provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants.
- If your application is successful you will be required to enter into a grant agreement with WSCC.

REFERENCES

We may ask you for contact details for an independent referee in the event of your application being successful. Should this be the case, we reserve the right not to issue final approval for any proposals until satisfactory references have been received.

RECURRENT APPLICANTS

If you applied for Social Enterprise Fund (SEF) funding on previous occasions you can apply again regardless of the outcome. If you were successful and therefore you are currently holding a SEF grant, you need to have met satisfactorily all our grant monitoring requirements before applying again.

STATE AID

WSCC must be happy that there are no State Aid issues with the proposal. State Aid, as defined by the European Community (EC) Treaty, is financial aid that has the following characteristics:

- it is granted through public resources;
- it favours certain undertakings or the production of certain goods;
- it distorts or threatens to distort competition; and
- it affects trade between Member States of the Community.

All four characteristics must be met for there to be State Aid.

The State Aid rules apply equally to non-profit-distributing community enterprises and voluntary organisations, as to individuals, private businesses or listed public companies. As part of the SEF Application Form, we ask you to confirm that your organisation falls within the de minimis regulations (EC Regulation 1998/2006) ("**the Regulations**"). The European Commission considers that public funding which complies with the Regulations has a negligible impact on trade and competition, and does not require notification and approval. The total de minimis aid which can be given to a single recipient is €200,000 over a three (3) year fiscal period. This ceiling takes into account all public funding given as de minimis funding over the previous three (3) fiscal years and which can take various forms (grants, loans, subsidised contracts, etc.). This period refers to the fiscal years immediately prior to the award of de minimis aid. The period should be the current fiscal year and the previous two

complete fiscal years. Please note the delivery of non-subsidised public sector contracts is not public funding for the purposes of State Aid. For more information on State Aid, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/state-aid>.

SPIN OUTS FROM PUBLIC BODIES

If you wish to bid for funding for the development of a social enterprise in its own right to deliver services currently delivered by a public body (including universities), the following applies:

- The grant applicant must apply as an individual on behalf of the social enterprise that is either already set up or is to be set up
- The grant applicant cannot be a department of WSCC or applying as an employee of WSCC
- The grant agreement would need to be signed on behalf of the social enterprise and not the individual (so by their director or trustee of the enterprise)
- The grant cannot be paid until the social enterprise has been set up separately to the local authority/public body
- If their social enterprise is not yet set up, WSCC would need to review the potential State Aid issues prior to making payment of the grant.
- If successful, the spin out social enterprise will need to be established no later than 12 months from the date of the application for the grant.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Social Enterprise Fund is administered by WSCC's Economic Development Team. Proposals will be assessed initially against the eligibility criteria explained above. Those proposals that pass the initial assessment will be considered by a panel comprising of two representatives from WSCC's Economic Development Team and the WSSSEN social enterprise adviser; this panel will make the final decision.

- The proposals submitted will be assessed on:
 - The quality of the business idea:
 - Is it going to generate trading income?
 - Is it feasible and realistic?
 - The impact of the business idea on West Sussex:
 - Will it create jobs, apprenticeships and or volunteering opportunities
 - Will the social objectives clearly benefit the communities in West Sussex

TIMETABLE FOR DECISION MAKING

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • 12 th August at 5pm | Deadline for receipt of applications |
| • 29 th August | Meeting of Panel to discuss entries |
| • 20 th September | Announcement of awards |

Except for the deadline to submit applications, please note that these **dates are indicative only** and may be subject to change.

FEEDBACK

We regret that it will not be possible to provide any feedback on proposals submitted.

AFTER YOU GET THE FUNDING

- You will enter into a grant agreement with WSCC; for Terms and Conditions please visit www.wssen.org.uk
- The work must be completed within 6 months from the date of receiving the fund and spent in the manner stated in the application form and in accordance with the grant agreement Terms & Conditions.
- In order to monitor this, successful applicants will be expected to provide a written report following conclusion of the work. The report must be provided within one month of the end date of the work as stated in the application.
- The report must show what progress has been made and how the funding has been used; in addition you will need to explain how you are planning to take your idea forward. You will need to keep copies of receipts for all the items and services you buy with the grant. WSCC may wish to visit or meet with successful applicants to discuss progress during this time.

HOW TO SEND THE FORMS

We prefer emailed application forms. Please e-mail your completed application forms to social.enterprise@westsussex.gov.uk. Please state "**West Sussex Social Enterprise Fund 2014-15 Stream 1 grants – Name of applicant organisation**" in the subject box of your email.

If your organisation is a company the application form should be signed by an authorised signatory of the Company, this is usually a Company Director.

If you are an individual you must sign the application form as an individual. If you are a group of individuals each individual should sign the application form.

If you a partnership, all partners should sign the application form unless one partner has explicit authority from the other partners to enter into agreements on behalf of the partnership.

Make sure the forms you submit are fully completed; stick to the number of words allowed per section and are signed.

To complete the signature you can either: submit the signature page as part of the Application Form in MS WORD format with an electronic signature clearly visible, or print the Signature Page, sign, scan, save as PDF, and email the PDF file along with you completed Application Form.

Your proposal will be assessed on the basis of the information in the application. **Do not submit any additional documents** with your application form as these will not be considered.

DEADLINE AND TIMESCALES

The deadline for the receipt of a completed Application Form [Stream 1] is **5pm on 12th August 2014.** Please note applications sent after this time will not be considered under any circumstances.

The timescales for the decision making process and announcement of successful applicants are provisional and may be subject to change.

HELP AND ADVICE

For more information and details on the support available visit: or www.wssen.org.uk or www.westsussex.gov.uk/sef

For any queries or if you need these documents in a different format, please e-mail: social.enterprise@westsussex.gov.uk

Please note WSCC is unable to provide you with any legal advice.