North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA)

Small Grant Programme Prospectus

September 2023

Contents

1. About North of Tyne Combined Authority

The North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA)

NTCA was formed in November 2018 through a Devolution Deal agreed with Government. This deal, and similar devolution agreements across the UK, saw certain administrative and funding powers transferred from Central Government to a regional level. NTCA is a Mayoral Combined Authority covering the Local Authority areas of Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, and Northumberland.

Our vision is of a dynamic and more inclusive economy, one that brings together people and opportunities to create vibrant communities and a high quality of life, narrowing inequalities and ensuring that all residents have stake in our region's future.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK, investing in Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business, and People and Skills. Our proposals for the People and Skills Investment Priority will address the following priorities:

- Supporting economically inactive people to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support including access to basic skills.
- Supporting people furthest from the labour market to access basic skills.
- Skills to progress in work and to fund local skills needs.

Small Grant Programme

NTCA recognises the important work that community-led organisations do to support residents who are not currently supported through mainstream employment provision. This small grant programme will focus on VCSE led community-based activities to engage and support residents of working age who face additional barriers to accessing mainstream or existing employment support services.

The programme will be flexible and has been established to fund, support, and evaluate VCSE led community-based activities that will engage residents and provide added value, through community-based support. The Programme will focus on adding capacity within current partnership structures and within small voluntary sector organisations.

Eligible activities within the small grant programme are likely to include:

- **Community engagement**, engaging with those residents, of working age, across the North of Tyne who are economically inactive.
- **Wrap around support** including the development of soft skills which enable residents to move closer to mainstream provision. This may include, for example, communication, self-management, team work and time management skills.
- **Promoting work** and its importance to all residents in the aim of supporting residents to live healthier and more independent lives.

- **Social inclusion activities** to support residents with health and well-being challenges to progress into employment provision.
- **Providing referral pathways** for residents into current employment provision.

North of Tyne Employment Partnerships

NTCA has invested resources to create Employment Partnerships in each Local Authority area. These dynamic and inclusive partnerships that bring together opportunities to support jobseekers, narrowing inequalities and ensuring that everyone has a stake in our region's future. Via these partnerships, we aim to help close the unemployment gap by supporting interventions to remove the barriers which make it difficult for residents to take-up employment and training opportunities and increase awareness and understanding of the local labour market, the job roles available, how to successfully secure one of these roles and the career opportunities available in these sectors.

We would expect all successful organisations to actively work with the relevant Employment Partnership(s) to ensure proposed activity adds value to, and does not duplicate, existing activity.

In advance of starting to deliver, NTCA require successful providers to work with Employment Partnerships to agree referral arrangements from their provision into wider employment support provision.

If you would like to contact the relevant Employment Partnership(s) to discuss how you can engage with the Partnership, and understand the existing employment support provision, please contact:

- Newcastle City Council: Chris Ord chris.ord@newcastle.gov.uk
- Northumberland County Council: Vicki Clarke victoria.clarke@northumberland.gov.uk
- North Tyneside Council: Aaron Wilson aaron.wilson@northtyneside.gov.uk

Our key funding principles

Working with our delivery partners, we listened to community-led organisations, voluntary sector ambassadors, as well as other stakeholders to understand and remove the barriers to their applying for support. We have adopted the London Funders pledge and the eight commitments from the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) which underpin our approach to the funding of this programme.

Wherever possible we will reduce application form requirements and use available public records to understand your purpose, programmes, governance, and financial standing. We have put in place a pre-application webinar and helpline support throughout the application process. More details are at the end of this document.

2. About our support

What will we fund?

The small grant programme will add value to the existing system of employment support for **economically inactive** residents of working age. This means individuals who are not in work and not actively seeking work (unlike unemployed individuals who are actively seeking work). The programme will support residents to access existing employment support and wellbeing services.

Grant funding is expected to be between £30,000 and £50,000. We anticipate supporting around 10-15 projects. Funding must be fully spent, and delivery completed by 31 March 2025.

Who will we fund?

To be eligible for funding, applicants must meet **all** of the following requirements:
- Be a constituted non-profit VCSE organisation.
- Be a grassroots and community-based organisation that are led by local people or where delivery is led by engagement with local people.
- Be able to demonstrate connections within the local community.
- Have a track record of supporting residents with barriers to employment in the North of Tyne area.
- Be willing to learn and collaborate with other delivery organisations, and with the Employment Partnerships.
- Support residents in one of the following three Local Authorities: Newcastle, North Tyneside, and/or Northumberland. Projects do not have to cover the full Local Authority area.
- Have a bank account in the name of the lead organisation.
- Have a current vulnerable adults and children's safeguarding policy.
- Have current DBS checks in place for staff and/or volunteers.
- Have current and appropriate insurance certificates (i.e., public liability, professional indemnity, and employer's liability).

What will we fund?
- Support for working age residents of the North of Tyne area, who are economically inactive.
- Projects that will engage and support residents who face additional barriers to accessing mainstream employment support services.
- Projects that will be completed by 31 March 2025.
- Projects complimenting and working with, or towards, existing provision.

What are the priorities?

Priority will be given to projects that deliver one or more of the following approaches:
- Projects that are testing new approaches with a view to learning for future delivery.
- Projects with a 'navigation' role, seeking to add value to and complement existing provision.

- Projects that will improve health and wellbeing, including social isolation and loneliness, and supporting residents to access mainstream/existing support.
- Peer-led projects, where residents are involved in peer support approaches.
- Collaborative approaches to project delivery across VCSE organisations.
- Digital inclusion activities.
- Local place-based approaches to delivery, addressing specific local barriers.
- Support for under-represented groups, including, for example, people from areas of low household income, Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic people, people with disabilities, care leavers, carers, and LGBTQ+ people. This list is not exhaustive.

Please note that all of these priority areas have an equal importance.

Projects must be willing to:
- Actively engage with the Employment Partnership(s) to identify suitable referral arrangements, to support residents in their journey towards employment through existing provision, including into mainstream services such as Jobcentre Plus, Local Authority provision, education and learning and other employment support activity.
- Provide information to show what you need to deliver the project, what activities are to be undertaken, the outputs to be delivered, and likely outcomes.
- Provide a clear 'customer journey' - a diagram showing how you work with a resident through your project.
- Deliver within Newcastle, North Tyneside and/or Northumberland. Projects do not have to cover the full Local Authority area.

Outputs and outcomes
Projects will be expected to deliver some essential outputs and outcomes. These are:

Essential outputs:
- People socially excluded[1] from accessing support
- Effective engagements between keyworkers and additional services
- Economically inactive people engaging with keyworker support.

Essential outcomes:
- Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services for at least 6 months after first contact
- Number of people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision.

Optional outputs:
Projects may also choose to deliver optional outputs, including:
- Number of people accessing mental and physical health support leading to employment
- Number of people supported to:
    - engage in life skills,

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[1] Social exclusion is defined as a lack of resources or access to services, or the inability to participate in activities which may have a negative impact on quality of life.

- o participate in education,
- o participate in volunteering,
- o participate in work experience programmes.

Optional outcomes:

Projects may also choose to deliver optional outcomes, including:
- The number of people engaged in job-searching following support
- The number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support.

For all outputs and outcomes, projects will be required to retain records and submit quarterly monitoring reports.

Fundable items include:
- Staff salaries and on-costs (i.e. detached youth worker, extended hours for existing staff).
- Project activities likely to include:
  - o community engagement activities
  - o development of soft skills
  - o wrap-around support and mentoring
  - o social inclusion type activities
  - o overheads (actual costs attributable to the project delivery and management)
  - o capacity-building and organisational developments costs (i.e. enhancing the effectiveness of the organisation such as staff development/training, volunteering)
  - o equipment (i.e. small capital costs – such as IT equipment).

We will not fund:
- Unconstituted or profit-making organisations.
- Organisations with a turnover of over £2m.
- Projects that will not be fully completed by March 2025.
- Organisations which are not community-led.
- Organisations not already providing some form of provision.
- Projects not complementing existing provision.
- Projects promoting religious interests and objectives. However, a faith organisation can apply as long as their project would benefit all members of the community, from all faiths.
- Retrospective funding (i.e. to cover costs incurred before the start of your project).
- Projects that focus on political campaigns and lobbying.
- Individuals.
- Capital projects.

What funding is available?

We estimate funding around 10 to 15 projects in total, with requests of between £30,000 to £50,000.

Funding will be paid quarterly in advance, and will be released following submission of the quarterly monitoring report.

3. Applying for support

How to apply?

To make the process as easy as possible, projects will work through a series of short questions. This will ensure that projects are eligible for support. If successful, the project will be able to access the main application form.

Closing date for applications: 9am Monday 9th October 2023.

An online presentation to understand more about the fund will be held on Monday 18th September, at 1pm. Places at the webinar can be booked here

You will need to create an account which will enable you to save as you work through your application form.

- To start an application please go to: bit.ly/NTCASmallGrantForm

- To retrieve a part saved application form please access your account at: www.GrantRequest.co.uk/SID_144?SA=AM

- **Stage 1: Eligibility quiz.** Once you have completed the eligibility quiz, you will be immediately notified on whether your organisation can proceed to the next stage of the application process.

- **Stage 2: Application form.** To tell us about more about your project and the residents you will support, including details on engagement methods and proposed referral arrangements. A budget template will be provided.

Following your application being submitted, Rocket Science will assess the applications, and then make recommendations to a grants panel. A grants panel will meet to make final decisions, and these will be communicated to you in November 2023. The grants panel will include representatives from NTCA, the VCSE sector and a Local Authority.

Delivery of projects can commence once the grant agreement has been signed and returned.

If you have any questions about the application process or any technical queries, please contact us on 0207 117 2456 or by email at: NT.YEP@rocketsciencelab.co.uk

4. Communicating decisions

What happens if our application is successful?
Our delivery partners, Rocket Science, will notify all successful projects by email and will work with you through your grant agreement.

What happens if our application is unsuccessful?
We will provide constructive feedback to all organisations by email.

5. Grant management and commitment

As part of the grant agreement you will be expected to:

- Collaborate with several stakeholders, including our delivery partners, independent evaluators, and other grantees.
- Report on a quarterly basis against targets and pre-agreed milestones. A brief monitoring template will be provided, which meets UK SPF funding requirements.

6. Further information

Support for applicants
If you have any questions about the application process, please contact us on 0207 117 2456 or by email at: NT.YEP@rocketsciencelab.co.uk