

OFFICER DECISION RECORD

General guidance note: *Please complete using Plain English, avoiding acronyms and use of jargon; this will be a published document so please be mindful of a public audience in completing this decision record.*

<p>Decision Title: Community Support Fund (CSF) Call 2 recommendations</p>
<p>Decision reference number: 01.07.2022</p>
<p>Decision date: 21.07.2022</p>
<p>Background / reason for decision:</p> <p>Delegated authority has been granted to the Combined Authority's Chief Executive to take decisions on the award of grants under the Community Support Funding in consultation with the Chief Executives of the Combined Authority's constituent councils.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 As part of this 2nd and final funding round as Part of Community Support Fund 14 bids were received in total they have been scored and moderated by an independent evaluation panel. 2 Following this assessment, 9 bids were recommended for funding, 6 of those with clarifications. 5 bids were not recommended for funding. 3 Overall the total funding requested which was recommended for funding (including those with conditions) is £456,257 which will engage 695 residents most disaffected by COVID and most vulnerable in our community to achieve employability and skills outcomes through various social value activity by June 2023.
<p>Options considered: <i>(as relevant/applicable)</i></p> <p>Not applicable in relation to this specific decision, i.e. this was the option considered.</p>
<p>Decision:</p> <p>Community Support Fund (CSF) – Call 2 funding recommendations For this second CSF funding round 14 applications were received, a summary of these applications is set out below:</p>

Projects recommended for funding with no clarifications:

- **Acta Community Theatre**, working with wider partners to engage 70 individuals from various underrepresented groups to participate in confidence and creative skills activities, such as theatre and performance. This project also supports community based artists and practitioners affected by the pandemic. Providing signposting and progression to wider opportunities in creative, cultural and community activity. **£21,055.71 requested.**
- **The Community Farm**, working with long-term partner Ecowild to deliver an 8 month wellbeing programme targeting 48 people with chronic mild to moderate mental ill health, and support towards self-management and society reintegration, progressing to work, volunteering or further learning. Activities will be nature based around their organic farm and food hub. **£49,928.93 requested.**
- **Curo Choice Ltd**, programme is a 5-week psychosocial and employability and skills project, with a focus on construction, trades and green skills, including the nurturing of vital soft skills, and practical roles such as low carbon manufacturing and retrofitting. This project will improve wellbeing of 96 women developing a programme focus on nurturing of vital soft skills, improve the wellbeing of women across life stages, improve confidence and reduce employability barriers to entry within the built environment and trade sectors. **£95,264.86 requested.**

Projects recommended for funding but with further clarifications:

- **Stepping Up**, working with consortia partner Babbasa and wider partners to inspire and enable 100 young people aged 15 – 18 years old to acquire skills needed to reach their potential. This will be conducted through workshops and mentoring with progression pathways to work experience taster, educational pathways, and business enterprise. **£95,895.00 requested.** (Stepping up is already funded by CSF for £48,500 and they are meeting their programme objectives). Conditional approval on first submitting acceptable clarifications in various areas including: clear justification of target groups; clear explanation of what is new/unique from existing funded elements of their work and how they are reach those who haven't already benefitted from delivery; explain how are they going to work with schools to ensure engagement; explanation of some specific aspects of their project management including a more comprehensive risk assessment.
- **Creativity Works**, working with an impressive list of consortia and wider partners to deliver innovative creative and digital Tech engagement activities each specifically designed to be accessible to a variety of target groups. The aim of the programme is to reduce barriers to access for employment in the creative and digital tech industries, to support confidence building and develop a positive sense of place and community and to provide clear routes into further training, volunteering and employment. **£67,071.08 requested.** (Creativity works is already funded by CSF for £41,000 and are meeting their programme objectives). Conditional approval on first submitting acceptable

clarifications in various areas including clear explanation of specifics working with vulnerable groups; clarify of meeting minimum requirement of the programme; clear explanation of their programme evaluation.

- **Chinese Community Wellbeing**, working with consortia partner Ashley Community Housing and wider partners to support 165 participants from East and South East Asian communities, in their own language, to be referred for specialist skills training and employment support. **£49,999 requested.** Conditional approval on first submitting satisfactory clarifications in various areas including more in-depth explanation on how they are going to target participants who are the most in need; clarification that activity meets minimum engagement requirement of the fund; further explanation on HACT measures to be evaluated.
- **Caudwell Children**, the project has been designed to help 30 young people with moderate to severe learning disabilities to become resilient and active citizens that contribute to the local community, achieving this by getting people online and improving digital connectivity, whilst building community cohesion. In partnership with Creativity Works the project can offer an opportunity for the learners to learn some creative skills, make new friends and this is particularly suitable for people who are in the process of recovery from ongoing mental health challenges, anxiety or depression specifically caused through isolation due to COVID. **£35,856.09 requested.** Conditional approval on first submitting satisfactory clarifications in various areas including more detail on referrals and local progression routes and links in the community.
- **Knowle West Media Centre**, to create a test & learn approach, to deliver rounds of a creative programme that will provide opportunities for 26 participants from various target groups to explore and play with digital design and digital fabrication equipment that will equip participants with the confidence to progress onto training and local volunteering opportunities. **£31,195.96 requested.** Conditional approval on first submitting satisfactory clarifications in various areas including pre-NEET and how the programme will remove barriers to the different target groups; more explanation on the uniqueness of the programme; an in-depth explanation of the specifics of the next steps to achieve the outcomes of the programme and progression; clear explanation of the social value and how will HACT be measured.
- **Creative Connex LTD**, working with 50 participants from a range of target groups from specific ethnic minority backgrounds engaging them in a variety of cultural, community and creative projects working with creative and environmental community organisations **£9,990 requested.** Conditional approval on first submitting satisfactory clarifications in various areas including a re-writing of the financial annex; clarifying the timeline; develop a more comprehensive risk assessment.

Projects not recommended for funding:

- **The Care Forum**, to create a one-stop shop online platform where participants can search, apply, and manage applications for volunteering

roles and access IAG and wraparound support to help them make the right match for their needs/skills and aspirations. **£90,000.00 requested.** Refused based on concerns that this is duplication of what it is already in place and replacing Local Authorities provision. Lack of detail about what is already available and how this is unique. Most of the costs are for development of an online platform rather than supporting delivery of activity with individuals; unsatisfactory evidence on target groups; and concerns project outcomes could not be achieved in timescales provided.

- **Beam Up Ltd**, to provide employability support to help people facing homelessness into sustainable and quality work. Participants will receive personalised support which will improve their life skills, increase their confidence, expand their knowledge of how to access other local advice and employability and skills training. **£76,000 requested.** Refused based on duplication and it is not explained how this project differs from existing provision. Concerns on the remote element which could not easily reach such a vulnerable group who need intensive support. The application lacks progression pathways to achieve project outcomes and objectives.
 - **Grassroot Community**, seeks funding to support 4 elements of a wider 6 element programme which seeks to raise aspirations, create role models and develop realistic pathways to future opportunities. Looking for funding for 5 young people aged 16 to 25 from marginalised communities across Bristol as part of a wider programme for 15 participants. **£24,715 requested.** Refused based on timescales as the programme is unable to meet progression outcomes. Also, this programme will only reach 5 people, so does not represent good value for money (cost per head) when compared to other projects.
 - **Bristol Somali Youth Voice**, to engage and support most marginalised community groups from deprived areas. The project will use existing social networks to engage and inspire target groups to involve in outdoor activities encouraging young people to talk about mental health. **£8,240 requested.** Refused based on incomplete application with blank financial annex provided. There are also concerns the programme would not provide minimum engagement for participants to be able to achieve project outcomes and objectives.
 - **1st Impressions (Bath) CIC**, working with consortia partners Bath Spa University, Bath College and University of Bath to engage various groups looking for employment with students supporting them to find employment by building their confidence through providing interview coaching and styling advice plus clothing and accessories. **£9,551 requested.** Refused based on the proposed activity goes beyond the project delivery timescale; no detail of uniqueness; social value does not meet the minimum requirements set out in the specification.
- 4 The total value of the projects above which are recommended for funding (both with and without clarifications) is **£456,256.55**. These will **engage 695 residents** most disaffected by COVID and most vulnerable in our community

to achieve employability and skills outcomes through various social value activity by June 2023.

Consultation:

The Chief Executives of the Combined Authority constituent councils were consulted on these proposals.

Officer making decision: *Patricia Greer*

Position: Chief Executive, West of England Combined Authority

Report / appendices / background documents:

None