



Education & Skills
Funding Agency



London Learning Consortium:
**ESF Community Grants
Strategy
Coast to Capital
2019**





Introduction

London Learning Consortium (LLC) has a track record of demonstrating the strategic and local impact of community initiatives on the communities and lives of those living in the South East. In light of this LLC has been awarded a contract to manage ESF Community Grant funding for the Coast to Capital region.

The Coast to Capital LEP has set a number of objectives that clearly set out the way in which these funds are to be used and how these funds are to be enhanced by external sources.

Our strategy is to take forward this direction and to fund providers across the Coast to Capital Region that focus on initiatives and schemes that impact directly on the lives of disadvantaged Individuals and the communities in which they live.

Our strategy also sets out how we are to take forward our commissioning as well as evaluate the work which we fund and how in turn this should be developed in the following year.

One key area of our work will be the development of progression opportunities which will enable project participants to move onto further training and employment where appropriate. We will prioritise partners who have already identified strong background of partnership working and aligning alternative funding sources to provide the best possible opportunities for participants.

As a part of this contract LLC will work closely with its partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries to implement best practice and proven strands of impact from existing provision. We will draw upon our extensive experience in both the Third and Further Education Sectors, to coalesce ideas in consultation with partners and stakeholders and to share best practise in order to exceed contractual targets.

Summary of contract requirements;

Contract Description	The management and running of a community grant programme funded by ESF in Coast to Capital region.
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Allocation Description	COMMUNITY GRANTS – Coast to Capital
Specification Title	COMMUNITY GRANTS
LEP Name	Coast to Capital
Start Date	01/04/2019
End Date	31/07/2021
Areas	<p>Adur District Council/Arun District Council/Brighton & Hove City Council/Chichester District Council/Crawley Borough Council /Croydon Council/Epsom & Ewell Borough Council/Horsham District Council/Lewes District Council/Mid Sussex District Council/Mole Valley District Council/Reigate & Banstead Borough Council/South Downs National Park/Surrey County Council/Tandridge District Council/West Sussex County Council/Worthing Borough Council</p> <p>Please note whilst the London Borough of Croydon is included in the Lot Area for this contract, Croydon is no longer part of the Coast to Capital region and therefore priority for this contract will <u>not</u> be given to applications delivered in this region under this contract. Applicants for delivery in Croydon can apply under the London South Community Grants contract – please see website for details.</p> <p>https://www.londonlc.org.uk/community-grants/london-south/</p>
Number of Participants	625
Overall Progression Rate	31%
Progression to Employment	17%
Progression to Education	14%
Age Range	16+
Participant Employment Status	<p>Specification states Unemployed or Inactive, with a specific focus on Economically Inactive</p> <p>Inactive = Not in employment and not registered as unemployed. Full time students are considered as inactive but not eligible for this provision as they are not available for work</p> <p>Unemployed = Persons who are without work, available for work and actively seeking work. Persons considered registered unemployed would be included. Where the period of unemployment is greater than 6 months for a person under 25 years old and greater than 12 months for who is 25 years old or older then the persons are classed as long-term Unemployed</p>
Subcontractor Eligibility	Third Sector Organisations (an organisation which operates within the Third Sector) or Small Organisations (Organisations with fewer than 49 full time equivalent staff and an annual turnover equal to or under EUR 10 million or balance sheet equal to or below EUR 10 million)
Participants over 50 years of age	14%
Participants with disabilities	22%
Participants from an ethnic minority	25%
Participants who are Women	36%
Generic Priority Groups	Parents/mothers, Carers, Disabled people, Older people 50+, BAME groups, particularly those groups with low labour market participation Migrants and refugees, Homeless, Ex-offenders

This contract aims to implement best practice learning from existing Community Learning Trusts. It also aims to deliver high quality learning provision that is community focussed and champions innovation.

LEP Background

Coast to Capital is perceived to be an affluent area with high employment rates. However, there are areas of relative deprivation that include levels of unemployment and economic inactivity. Sections of the community such as lone parents and the disabled face additional challenges. In certain areas wage levels are low and the employment on offer may be low level, seasonal and insecure. Individuals often face multiple barriers: low and outdated skills, digital exclusion, health issues, and lack of affordable childcare or affordable transport. http://www.coast2capital.org.uk/storage/downloads/esif_strategy_april_2016_refresh-1510238036.pdf - Page 39.

The latest Annual Population Survey (APS) indicated that in the Coast to Capital area, unemployment was slightly higher than that of the South East of England as a whole. <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/lep/1925185539/report.aspx#workless>

According to the Coast to Capital Economic Profile 2017 the unemployment rate in the region stands at 3.9% and figures from the 'Annual Population Survey' show the number of unemployed in the Coast to Capital region is currently standing around 41,300 people (equating to 3.9% of the area), from the period of October 2016 to September 2017. In addition, there are also 64,900 economically inactive people who have identified themselves as wanting a job. http://www.coast2capital.org.uk/storage/downloads/coast_to_capital_economic_profile_2017-1517388688.pdf

There are very significant numbers of households who do not benefit from the job opportunities in the Coast to Capital area. There are wide variations at a local level and between male and female unemployment rates. Bringing those currently out of work back into the labour market across the Coast to Capital area, particularly in Croydon, Brighton and Hove, and the rural areas would further enable the Coast to Capital area to contribute to UK economic growth.

One of the recognised ways to address social mobility is to help unemployed and inactive people to secure employment. Feedback received from live ESF projects suggests that for many people who have been unemployed, or who have a track record of a variety of short-term, part-time working, securing and retaining meaningful employment can be a real challenge. Similarly, for many people a lack of experience in a relevant sector can be a particular barrier to securing employment.

Intensive support is often required for those facing multiple and complex barriers in moving closer towards the labour market. Evidence suggests that when these situations are tackled in a holistic and innovative way and through early intervention, outcomes can be improved. For example, working with young people to increase their resilience in workless households and when facing other barriers can help break the cycle. Similarly, those in marginalised groups will often need support on a number of fronts in order to help them re-engage.

In Coast to Capital, there are pockets of deprivation, substantial numbers of workless households and youth unemployment is a particular area of concern. Our analysis shows that there is still more to do and further interventions aimed at these target groups are needed to address the market failure in services. These interventions should be designed to provide flexible, multi-agency support to take due account of the complexity and multiplicity of issues which many face.

Whilst it is difficult to accurately predict the impact on employment of the UK leaving the European Union, it is likely that there will be shortages of labour in lower skilled jobs. It is important to ensure that the Coast to Capital area is providing the potential labour market with the skills and aspiration to access these jobs and in time to progress through a career pathway.

Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership's new Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) 2018-30 for the area can be found at <http://www.coast2capital.org.uk>

In addition, proposed activity must fit with the Coast to Capital ESIF strategy which can be found at http://www.coast2capital.org.uk/storage/downloads/esif_strategy-1475574393.pdf

Guidance for Organisations in their submission of bids for Community Grants

When assessing applications for Community Grants, the Managing Agent will use reasonable endeavours to ensure that each Recipient Organisation will achieve the following:

- Active inclusion of Participants.
- Participants either entering Employment, or being engaged in job search, or being engaged in education or training, or gaining a qualification upon leaving. (*Quantified target)
- Benefits Participants who are Unemployed for 6 months or more or who are Inactive on starting provision. (*Output target)
- benefits Participants who are more distant from the labour market and who may face multiple disadvantages to tackle their multiple, complex and profound barriers to work and to move towards or into employment, or to sustain employment.

**Quantified and Output targets as defined in the ESF Operational Programme.*

Projects funded by Community Grants can deliver a wide range of activities including but not limited to:

- First contact engagement activities, e.g. activities that benefit Participants who are not normally in contact with official organisations for example but not exclusively DWP, FE Colleges, for example by arranging events or training in places that Participants feel comfortable to visit.
- Projects to improve confidence, motivation and social integration such as sport, gardening, music, art and other creative activities.
- Developing local networks and groups to support people to get a job or access learning e.g. Job Clubs or Learning Champion type activity.
- Softer skills development e.g. assertiveness, anger management and motivation.
- Innovative approaches to attract under-represented Participant groups into learning.

Projects must be delivered by the Recipient Organisation within the Lot Area, and all funded delivery, and outcomes must occur before the end of the Contract.

*Quantified and Output targets as defined in the ESF Operational Programme.

LLC will also provide capacity-building support to the successful organisations delivering the grants. This could include developing their expertise in providing progression routes for their Participants and measuring success to build evidence of good practice. LLC will also include support to broker and build relationships between the grant recipients and statutory/strategic bodies at a local level.

Commissioning

Community Grant publicity and call for applications:

1. As part of the commissioning process LLC will:
 - a. Develop and deliver an engagement and marketing strategy which:
 - i. reflects the Lot Area specific requirements to encourage applications from appropriate organisations to apply for Community Grants;
 - ii. Utilises partnership working with organisations engaged in similar provision in the Lot Area.
 - b. Publicise the availability of Community Grants and make calls for grant applications in line with agreed priorities in the Lot Area.
 - c. Develop, implement and administer a grant application process and timetable for Community Grant applications throughout the lifetime of the Contract. Note that this may be a rolling programme or through specific competitions during the Contract lifetime including:
 - i. Specifying what activities will be supported
 - ii. Specifying eligibility and priority groups
 - iii. Setting selection criteria
 - iv. Establishing the grant application scoring criteria
 - v. Setting the timescales
 - vi. Publicising the application process to be followed.
 - d. Receive and assess applications for Community Grants using a common set of open and transparent criteria, which meet the specific requirements for the Lot Area set out above.
 - e. Manage volume of applications from the Lot Area.
 - f. Select successful Recipient Organisations, agreeing levels of approved Grant and planned outcomes and issuing Grant Agreement.
 - g. Enter in to agreement Grant Agreement with each Recipient Organisation which sets out the conditions on which the Community Grants are provided and contains as a minimum:
 - i. Payment mechanism
 - ii. Participant Eligibility requirements
 - iii. Evidence Requirements
 - iv. Monitoring arrangements

- h. Provide support to Recipient Organisations to help them manage ESF funds especially in maintaining records of actual grant expenditure to ensure a full audit trail.
- i. Ensure the Recipient Organisation keeps financial records such as invoices to support expenditure, bank statements, staff time sheets, job descriptions, expenses payments and is able to fully evidence any claims made in accordance with the Grant Agreement, Funding Rules and Evidence Requirements.
- j. Monitor performance and delivery by each Recipient Organisation in accordance with their Grant Agreement and report on performance to the ESFA including the impact of delivery in supporting employment outcomes for Participants.
- k. Ensure that Participants are eligible to access ESF funds as described above.
- l. submit completed returns to the funding agency and report the number of learner starts for the academic year in which the activity was delivered as set out in the Contract Specification.

Community Grants Award Process

- 2. LLC will design, implement and administer a Community Grants Award Process which shall:
 - a. Achieve a proportionate balance between fairness and transparency and administrative efficiency in the use of public monies
 - b. Includes a structured series of application rounds which is designed to optimise the benefits to be derived from ESF Funding.
 - c. be sufficiently flexible to allow for the making of grant awards in circumstances where there is high demand for funding but low available budget.
 - d. Ensure that grants are only awarded to applications, which meet the Eligibility Criteria identified above.
 - e. Be designed to support delivery of the Programme Targets as above, over the course of the Contract.
 - f. Ensure that any successful applications meet the specific requirements for the Lot Area set out above. Note that whilst LLC shall have the responsibility for this process, the ESFA expects that representatives of the LEP would sit on any award panel where appropriate.
 - g. Provide support to unsuccessful Community Grant applicants to enable them to submit a future bid.
- 3. In addition LLC shall:
 - a. Agree the level of approved Community Grant funding for each Community Grant with the Recipient Organisation.
 - b. Issue a Grant Agreement to the Recipient Organisation which sets out the terms and conditions of the Community Grant award.
 - c. Ensure all Conflicts of Interest and assessed, recorded and managed in line with our Conflict of Interest Policy.

Support to Recipient Organisations

4. Finally LLC will:

- a. Provide support to Recipient Organisations to help them manage ESF Funding especially in maintaining records of actual grant expenditure to ensure a full audit trail.
- b. Ensure that Recipient Organisations keep financial records such as invoices to support expenditure, bank statements, staff time sheets, job descriptions, expense payments in accordance with the Grant Agreement.
- c. Support the recipient organisations to develop Required Community Grants Reports in line with Grant Agreement Requirements.

How to take your proposal and tender forward?

If you are interested in working with LLC as a part of this contract, complete the Community Grants expression of interest document which can be found here

<https://www.londonlc.org.uk/community-grants/> and return to community.grants@londonlc.org.uk.

If you have any questions please contact Amanda O'Shea a.oshea@londonlc.org.uk or by telephone, 0208 774 4040.

How we will evaluate your proposals?

LLC has a panel of staff and external representatives that evaluates each proposal. We select provision and partners on how closely they demonstrate match to contractual targets and LEP priorities.

When will you know if you have been successful?

We have published a timeframe for our commissioning. This we intend to adhere to subject to unforeseen circumstances. Providers will receive a short summative feedback if they are unsuccessful.

Key Documents/Sites – Please review before preparing your submission

Eligibility Criteria: means the [ESF National Eligibility criteria set out here:](#)

[Ruleshttps://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/626878/ESF_national_eligibility_rules.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/626878/ESF_national_eligibility_rules.pdf) .

Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership's new Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) 2018-30 for the area can be found at <http://www.coast2capital.org.uk>

ESIF Strategy for Coast to Capital.

http://www.coast2capital.org.uk/storage/downloads/esif_strategy_april_2016_refresh-1510238036.pdf

Annual Population Survey (APS)

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/lep/1925185539/report.aspx#workless>

Coast to Capital Economic Profile 2017

http://www.coast2capital.org.uk/storage/downloads/coast_to_capital_economic_profile_2017-1517388688.pdf