



Improving Reach

A Capacitybuilders grant programme

Improving Reach Programme

Funding guidelines 2008-11

Important

Closing date for applications: 5pm Monday 28th January 2008

Applications to be made via www.capacitybuilders.org.uk

Associated document – Frequently asked questions – can be downloaded from the website.

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Contents

Background	4
Our aims for the Improving Reach programme	6
Our funding priorities	9
How to apply	10
The assessment process	12

Important

These guidelines tell you:

- What the *Improving Reach* programme aims to do
- What conditions you need to meet to get funding from the programme.

You must apply on our website at www.capacitybuilders.org.uk

Please send us your application by 5pm on Monday 28th January 2008

We will only accept applications through our website.

If you need more information about the programme or how to apply, please send an e-mail with your questions to info@capacitybuilders.org.uk. We cannot have detailed discussions about your application at this stage.

We will hold several regional information sessions over the next few weeks for organisations interested in sending us applications.

If you are interested in coming to these events, please send an e-mail to info@capacitybuilders.org.uk

1. Background

We are a non-departmental public body set up in April 2005 to create a more effective third sector by building on skills and resources. By 'third sector', we mean non-government, not-for-profit organisations which have environmental, social or cultural aims (for example, voluntary and community organisations, charities, faith groups, social enterprises, co-operatives and mutual societies).

These guidelines set out our aims and expectations for the new *Improving Reach* programme for 2008 to 2011. The programme is an important part of the continuing ChangeUp investment programme supported by the Office of the Third Sector at the Cabinet Office.

ChangeUp is a joint programme developed by the Government and organisations in the third sector. The ChangeUp programme sets out how we can develop support to improve the skills and resources organisations in the third sector need to achieve their goals.

The ChangeUp programme sets out high-level aims to provide the main skills needed by third-sector organisations which are directly involved in campaigning, providing services or working with communities. (These are called 'frontline organisations'.) The aims set out in the programme will:

- improve their performance
- develop their paid and unpaid workforce
- make better use of information and communication technologies
- improve the way they are run
- improve their ability to recruit and develop volunteers and fund their activities.

ChangeUp also sets out a framework for making changes to improve the support provided to these organisations.

We are providing a new *Improving Reach* programme in line with the commitments we made in 'Destination 2014' – our strategy for putting the ChangeUp programme in place.

The current *Improving Reach* programme is a test programme which began in 2006 and will continue until March 2008. With the new programme, we want to build on the work we have done through the test programme.

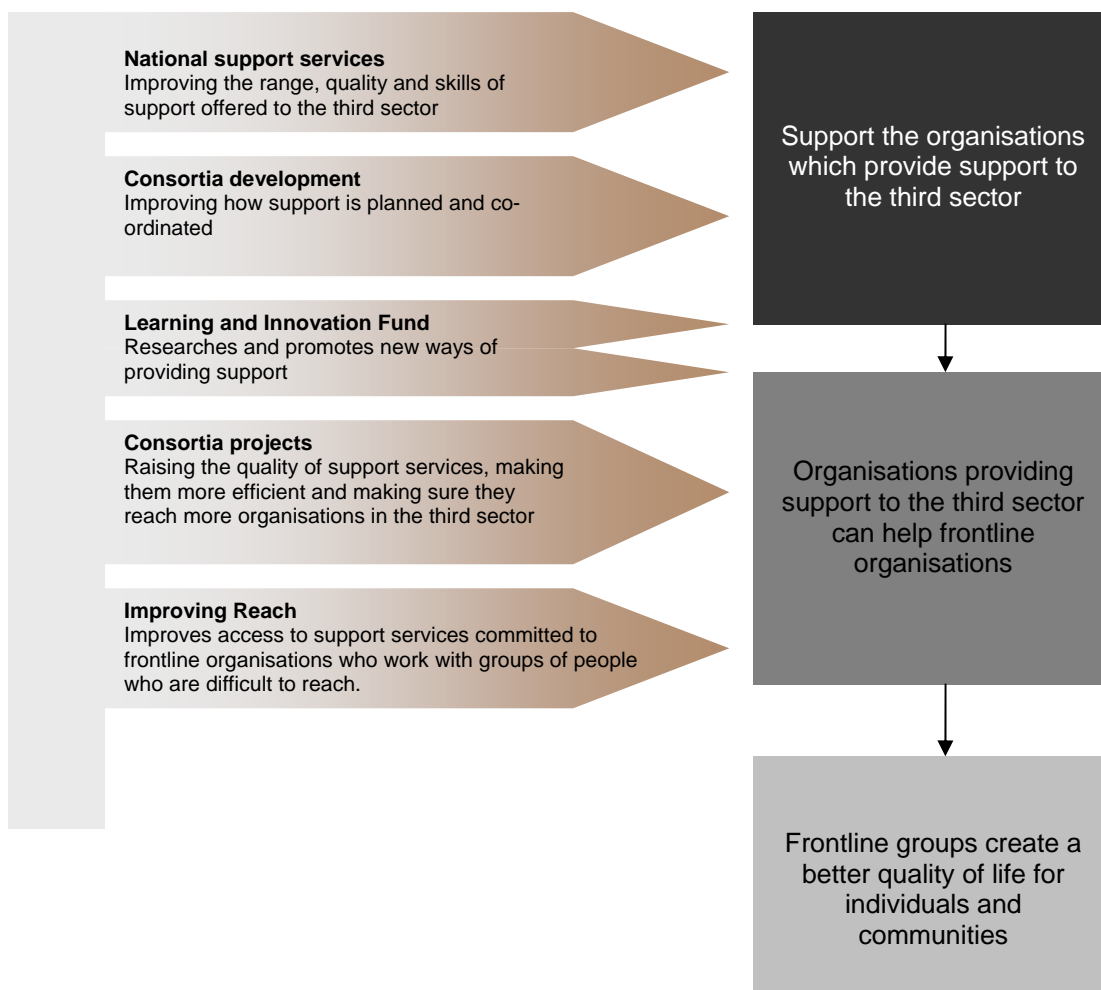
We are here to help create a more effective third sector which is more able to create a better quality of life for people and communities.

We want all third-sector organisations to be able to get high-quality support that meets their needs, when they need it. The table below is a summary of our current funding programmes. In the table, we use the term 'consortia'. Consortia are groups of organisations which joined together in 2003 to receive funds to improve support to frontline organisations. Some work at a regional level, some at sub-regional level and some at local-authority level.

Our current funding programmes

Name of funding programme

Outcome



2. Our aims for the *Improving Reach* programme

Support services for the third sector are support services designed to:

- improve the skills and resources of frontline organisations; and
- make sure they are able to continue their work after our funding has run out.

Support services include:

- developing skills through training and development;
- advice and support in developing strategies for bringing in more income;
- help with business planning and putting those plans in place; and
- networks to support organisations campaign and represent people effectively.

Improving support services can play an important role in helping and strengthening frontline organisations in the third sector, so they can work more effectively to create a better quality of life for people and communities.

Our programmes fund work that will provide more access to high-quality support services that are appropriate to the needs of frontline organisations.

Providing equal opportunities

All organisations we fund are committed to promoting equality and valuing people's differences. You must make sure this is part of all your plans and activities. We support the role the third sector can play in challenging discrimination and disadvantage, and we work to make sure organisations in the third sector have equal access to the support services we fund.

The Improving Reach programme provides extra resources to extend and improve the support services available to frontline organisations committed to working with communities across England which are excluded from taking full part in society. Communities are 'excluded' when particular groups of people, or particular areas, face one or more problems such as unemployment, low incomes, poor housing, high crime levels, poor health and family problems.

We recognise that specialised support services can play an important part in helping the frontline organisations which deliver direct services to excluded communities, including:

- delivering services which meet specific needs;
- increasing access to sector support services; and
- providing a way for communities to be represented and have a voice.

The *Improving Reach* programme aims to make these specialised support services in the third sector, and the relatively small organisations that deliver them, more effective.

Providing positive results

We expect everyone who receives a grant from us to show how the activity we are funding will meet the needs of frontline organisations working in and with excluded communities.

Between 2008 and 2011, each grant will support work which contributes to one of two outcomes.

Outcome 1 Smaller organisations have more skills and resources to provide support services to third-sector frontline organisations which work with excluded communities. These smaller organisations are able to continue their work after our funding has run out.

Outcome 2 More frontline organisations working in and with excluded communities can get high-quality support services which are appropriate for them.

By funding activities that achieve these outcomes, we believe we will fill the gaps in current support services for frontline organisations in the third sector which work with excluded communities.

The following sections set out examples of the type of work we are likely to fund under the programme.

Outcome 1: Smaller organisations have more skills and resources to provide support services to third-sector frontline organisations which work with excluded communities. These smaller organisations are able to continue their work after our funding has run out.

Work we may fund could include:

- strengthening the main skills and resources of a small organisation that provides support services to the third sector;
- thorough business planning and finding ways of bringing in income;
- work that develops leadership;
- putting in place recognised quality-assurance systems;
- technical support in particular areas of the organisation, such as human resources, management and so on);
- mergers, alliances and partnerships between organisations which provide support services to the third sector, including between specialist and other providers; and
- developing effective roles which represent your organisation.

We will not fund short-term work or one-off projects. We want to help develop stronger organisations that are able to provide high-quality support for frontline organisations in the long-term. If your application is successful, you will need to put in place an independently accredited quality-assurance system for the length of time you are using the grant.

We will expect you to show how investing in your own skills and resources will improve support services for frontline groups in the third sector which work in and with excluded communities.

Outcome 2: More frontline organisations working in and with excluded communities can get high-quality support services which are appropriate for them.

Work we may fund could include:

- new services to meet the needs of frontline organisations who do not currently receive support services;
- proposed activity to support frontline organisations to get existing services (such as outreach work);
- developing the skills and resources of existing support services so they can meet the needs of frontline organisations working in and with excluded communities;
- giving frontline organisations working in and with excluded communities more influence through initiatives that involve them and give them more opportunities to have their say; and
- improve the quality of support services (by achieving quality accreditation).

Work to achieve this outcome will support frontline organisations which are not currently well served by support services because of cultural, language, geographic or other barriers (see our priorities in section 3). You should provide evidence with your application that clearly shows how your proposed activity will remove the gap in services.

To make sure our investment helps to achieve long-term change, you must show how you will make sure the work we fund becomes a part of your day-to-day activities by the time our funding ends.

Evidence

As well as explaining how you will meet one or more of these outcomes, you must provide evidence to show you have considered:

- how many frontline organisations will benefit from the work we are funding;
- how links can be made with existing support providers working in your area, including ChangeUp consortia working across England; and
- how you will continue activities after our funding ends (our funding runs to March 2011 only).

3. Our funding priorities

Because we do not have enough money to fund every organisation which applies to us for funding, we will give priority to support services which fill a gap in existing services to frontline organisations.

We will give priority to organisations developed by and working with:

- black and ethnic-minority communities
- refugee and migrant communities
- faith groups
- isolated rural communities.

These priorities are the same as the priorities we set for the first round of *Improving Reach* grants in 2006-2008. We want to continue focusing on these priorities for another three years to make sure these support services are able to change and improve.

Other priorities

However, we recognise that there may be organisations developed by or working with excluded communities in other parts of the third sector which are also not well served by support services.

So, we invite applications from organisations which want to improve and develop support services for excluded communities outside our four priorities shown above.

If you are applying for a grant for work outside our four priorities, you must set out a clear case for why we should invest in your proposed activity. You should tell us:

- why the proposed activity is needed
- what the gaps in current services are
- what effect your proposed activity will have.

We expect that work funded outside of our four priorities will amount to less than 25% of the total investment for the programme.

4. How to apply

Please read these funding guidelines in full before you apply. You may also find it helpful to visit our website at www.capacitybuilders.org.uk for more information about us and our strategy for providing ChangeUp – Destination 2014.

We will only accept applications through our website. First, you will need to fill in an eligibility checklist on our website to find out if you are eligible. If you are eligible, we will ask you to register your organisation's details and then fill in an application online. You must send us this by the closing date, Monday 28th January 2008.

We will not accept applications by post, e-mail or fax.

When you send us your application online you will receive an automatic acknowledgement. We may contact you if we need any more information to assess your application.

You may send your application at any time but we will only assess it once the closing date has passed. We will not consider any applications we receive after the deadline.

The closing date for sending us applications is:

5pm on Monday 28 January 2008.

Funding available

This programme offers three-year grants. Over the next three years, we expect to make about £6 million a year available for the Improving Reach programme.

We expect to receive over 800 applications but we will only have funding available for up to 100 grants.

We will provide grants of up to £150,000 a year for three years.

The amounts will normally be spread equally over the three years (so, if you receive a grant of £75,000 over the three years we will pay £25,000 a year).

Who will we fund?

We only fund organisations that benefit the public or community and that are not able to use their assets for private gain. We may also fund registered charities or companies limited by guarantee.

We have prepared a detailed eligibility checklist for organisations considering applying to the programme for funding. You can find this on our website.

What costs will we fund?

Our funds may support:

- specific activities; or
- the costs of developing your organisation. This includes staff salaries and overheads.

When you budget for the cost of your proposed activity, you should take into account the total cost of your activities, plus a reasonable share of the costs of running your organisation.

We will not support applications that:

- directly replace or make up gaps in public-sector funding (including contracts)
- we think are the main responsibility of other public-sector funders (such as local and central government and health authorities)
- provide a frontline service to the public
- are for, or on behalf of, a locality based Consortium that already receives funding from Capacitybuilders
- are from individual people, or which benefit one person
- are for mainstream education, including schools
- promote religion
- are for endowment funds or an organisation which wants to give out grants on our behalf
- are for work that has already taken place
- are for work outside of England.

5. The assessment process

Criteria (the things we assess your application against)

When we assess your application, as well as considering how well your proposal meets the outcomes and priorities we described earlier, we will give more priority to applications which show they can achieve one or more of the following.

- If the proposed activity could have a major effect on support offered to one or more of the priority groups.
- If there is commitment to changing your organisation through making your support services part of your day-to-day activities.
- If the proposed activity meets a need you have identified.
- If the proposed activity is well managed, realistic and of a high quality.
- If the proposed activity involves working jointly with others (if this is relevant).

Other criteria

We will also focus on:

- Support organisations which normally spend less than £1 million a year
- Work in geographical areas, or with particular communities that we have not already provided much funding for.

How we will make decisions about funding

We will assess your application against our criteria and priorities. At the same time, we will look at the other applications we have received and what we have funded recently.

We want to fund work in all of the nine English regions and it is likely that we will receive more applications for some of these areas than others.

We will assess all applications separately. As part of this process, we will get advice about what specialist support is needed in each of the regions.

We will shortlist organisations and our Grants Committee will consider them.

We will give final recommendations, along with all the other applications, to our Grants Committee to make the final decisions. The Grants Committee will meet in March 2008 to consider the applications.

The Grants Committee's decision is final. There is no appeals process.

We will write to you to tell you the committee's decision within 10 working days of the meeting. We will give you feedback if you ask us.

Complaints

We know that we will receive a large number of applications. Many organisations will meet some of our criteria and priorities but we will not be able to fund all of them. Unfortunately, we have to make difficult choices and will have to reject many good proposals.

Just because you are not shortlisted does not mean that we do not think you are doing good and valuable work.

If you have any complaints about how we have handled your proposal, you should write to Simon Hebditch, our Chief Executive. If your complaint is about our Chief Executive you should write to Chris Pond, the Chair of the Board.

However, you cannot appeal against any decision made by our Grants Committee about whether or not we fund your organisation.

If you are not sure about whether your work fits our criteria and priorities after reading these guidelines, you can send a question by e-mail to info@capacitybuilders.org.uk.

We cannot have detailed discussions about your particular proposal at this stage.

Over the next few weeks, we will be holding several regional information sessions for organisations interested in submitting proposals.

Please tell us you are interested in finding out about these events by e-mailing info@capacitybuilders.org.uk