

Locality



Background information

Locality is a national organisation committed to a local approach. We support community organisations to be strong and successful, to meet local needs and to give people a purpose, good places to live and good health.

Building resilience in community organisations and creating lasting change is at the heart of what we do, fundamental to this is to support organisations to be sustainable, robust and able to meet the demands for their services.

We know from our day to day work that there are amazing ideas, skills, innovation, passion, local knowledge and long-term commitment within our neighbourhoods. By creating strong and successful community organisations, we can help to unlock this power and provide solutions to the big economic, social and environmental challenges community organisations face.

At Locality we have staff in every region of England enabling us to work in the heart of communities to help community organisations to be stronger and more robust. Effectively we represent the best of both worlds: having the influence and knowledge base which comes with being a national organisation, whilst prioritising the building of local relationships with community organisations. We have developed knowledge and experience of how to build resilience in a way that is practical and effective, addressing specific issues, and overcoming complex and technical problems. Our experienced staff will work alongside you, fulfilling the role of advisor, mentor, critical friend, and honest broker.

Above all we are friendly, approachable, and committed to strengthening the community sector.

Find out more at: www.locality.org.uk

Offer Under Enhance

Community Engagement

Community engagement (6 days over approximately 4 months)

Locality can provide a robust strategy (4 days approx.) and plan to help engage and retain the support of a large cross section of people in the community. This could range from embedding local people directly in your work – as staff, volunteers, trustees and members, to undertaking Community Organising, holding events, running surveys, to incubating social action activities led by others in your community.

Robust community engagement:

- supports your **accountability** (legitimises you acting as a voice for the community),
- supports your **reach** (engaging and working with people who are not naturally drawn to get involved),
- builds greater **relevance** in your work (ensures that your services/activities are those most wanted/needed by your community),
- *unleashes a wealth of resources* in the community (talent, ideas, energy, skills, knowledge, experience and even small finance)
- helps to tap into and build **strong networks** (every person engaged will potentially opens you up to their network of family, neighbours, friends and interest groups).

Our approach is to:

- understand the profile and needs of the community being served and the multiple community identities within it (that add layer to a 'place-based' community)
- to assess how your work is meeting the needs and wants of the community and how your structure (including staffing and volunteering) has a profile that broadly reflects the area you serve (uncovering information about where the gaps are/who isn't being served or represented)
- support you to deploy a mix of different approaches to engaging local people in your work (reflecting the variety/diversity of people and their differences in available time, interest and preference).

Tools can include: Community Organising; social action hubs; digital engagement; events and discussion groups; surveys and interactive maps; and well as improving communication/network channels. Community engagement works best where it is an on-going process of participation to unlock the power in communities, and it's invaluable in helping you design and deliver projects and making sure local people are part of the journey.

In addition to the strategy, we can also support through:

- Staff training and mentoring to support their orientation to engagement (1-2 days approx)
- Holding an engagement event or discussion group to demonstrate an approach to community engagement through practice (1-2 days approx)
- Specific support on online surveys, face-to-face interviews and focus groups (1-2 days approx)

Any additional support needs (including length of time) will be identified in the workplan written by the assessor following the diagnostic visit.

When might the Partner be the most appropriate solution for the charity?

We work closely with charities to give you the support that is right for you. Our national team will help you to define your goals and aims and agree timelines with you. Our staff are based in every English region, so we are embedded in local communities but at the same time bring with us a wealth of experience gathered from supporting hundreds of community organisations across the country.

Our support will be right for you if you:

- Want to reconnect or rebuild trust with the community
- Want to reach sections of the community that you have had difficulty reaching
- Want to understand and communicate your impact
- Need specific support with collecting and managing impact data

Input Needed from the charity

Any organisation wanting support with Community Engagement would need to commit time to workshops, planning meetings, staff training (approx. 1 person day from the organisation for each Locality day)