FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

OPPORTUNITY AND POTENTIALS FUNDS

VOLUNTEERING IN AN ACTIVE NATION

February 2017

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**A) Eligibility and partnerships**

1. **Is my organisation eligible to apply?**

To apply for investment from the Potentials or Opportunity Funds, you will need to be eligible to receive Lottery funding (please see the [Funding FAQs](https://www.sportengland.org/funding/funding-faqs/) on our website for more details) and be able to demonstrate an appropriate level of governance (Tier 1). Please see our [Code for Sports Governance](https://www.sportengland.org/about-us/governance/a-code-for-sports-governance/).

If you are not a sports organisation, you will probably recognise a number of aspects of our Code already, as many of the principles set out in this Code are widely accepted as being elements of good practice in corporate governance. The volunteering funds will be covered by Tier 1of the Code, our minimum level of mandatory governance.

Support can be given by our Grants team to organisations who we wish to fund who do not meet the Governance Standards at the time of submitting an expression of interest. You will need to be willing to make any necessary changes to your governance within agreed timescales.

If you have any specific questions on eligibility and the Governance Standards please contact our funding team on 0345 8508 508.

1. **What kind of organisations are Sport England wanting to work with?**

We are looking to fund a wide and diverse range of organisations and would welcome applications from those who are new to working with us, in addition to existing partners.

To reach the target audiences, it is likely that organisations will have a strong local knowledge and understanding of their lives, motivations and barriers, and their trust.

We are aiming to award at least 50% of the funding from the Opportunity Fund to organisations who are new to Sport England.

Please visit page 20 of the Volunteering Investment Guide to find out more about the kind of partners we want to work with.

**B) Definitions and Audience**

**3. What do you mean by sport and physical activity?**

The sport or physical activity that you want to use to engage people in volunteering must be recognised by Sport England. For details on what sports we recognise, please see <http://www.sportengland.org/our-work/national-governing-bodies/sports-that-we-recognise/>

**4. What do you mean by ‘Potentials’?**

Potentials are defined by the #iwill campaign as young people who are interested in doing some or more social action. It includes those who say they are likely to do social action in the next 12 months, or don’t know whether they will participate. It also encompasses those who are currently doing social action, as well as, those who have never participated. However, importantly, they do not have a strong commitment to or history of engaging regularly in social action, but have indicated some interest in doing some or more. For more information, visit [www.iwill.org.uk](file:///C:\Users\jennybe\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\LKI7XZB9\www.iwill.org.uk)

**5. What do you mean by ‘meaningful experience’?**

Projects need to demonstrate that the individuals they engage will participate in rewarding, engaging and enjoyable experiences. We are looking for projects which can offer opportunities which have a positive impact on both the individuals and the wider community.

We also know that meaningful volunteering and social action takes time and the benefits are unlikely to be achieved through one-off opportunities. You should consider carefully what opportunities your project can provide to the individuals to grow and progress and why it is appropriate to them as individuals.

**6. We want to engage 18-20 year olds in an economically disadvantaged community into social action. Which fund should we apply for?**

Projects whose audience is between the ages of 10-20 should apply to the Potentials Fund.

**7. We want to work with young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETS) who are between the ages of 16-25 in an economically disadvantaged area- to which fund should we apply?**

To identify which fund is appropriate for your project you should consider who the primary beneficiaries are. If the majority of beneficiaries are under 20, you should apply for the Potentials Fund, but you will need to ensure the programme directly reaches and impacts those 20 and under.

If the majority of individuals you anticipate benefitting from your project are over 20, you should apply to the Opportunity Fund.

**8. What is the difference between Social Action and Volunteering?**

Social Action is practical action in the service of others that creates a positive change. Social action includes activities such as volunteering, fundraising and campaigning.

Getting involved in mentoring, supporting people and improving the local area are all forms of youth social action.  We are interested in projects which want to empower young people to bring about positive change through sport and physical activity.  This could mean changing people’s behaviour by engaging a new audience into sport of physical activity who would otherwise be inactive, or canoeists who want to improve the environment by clearing riverbanks of litter.  It is not just about more of the same - we want to use the power of sport and physical activity to change lives.

**9. Should we focus on all young people/ individuals from economically disadvantaged communities, or should we focus on a specific audience, setting or transition point?**

Due to the diverse characteristics, perceptions, experience, motivations and barriers of people within the target audiences, we know that any one intervention or approach is unlikely to appeal to everyone within this demographic. We therefore recommend that you are targeted in your approaches.

We would strongly encourage you to use the Sport England Volunteering Insight Guide to help you understand who currently volunteers or takes part in social action (see page 8 of the Insight Guide) alongside your own experiences and understanding to determine which audience you want to target with your project.

**C) The process**

**10. Can my organisation apply for both funds?**

Organisations should only apply to one of the funds. We are looking for innovative ideas tailored to their audience. Please give careful consideration to which fund is most appropriate to your audience. Please read Volunteering in an Active Nation, the Volunteering Investment Guide and the Insight Guide to help you to decide which fund is the right one for your organisation.

**11. I already receive funding from Sport England, am I eligible to apply for funding?**

Yes, you can apply to either fund. However, we will not fund specific projects we either currently, or have historically invested in. The exception to this would be if the project was testing how it could be scaled up, or replicated with a new audience, community or partnerships approach.

**12. What information will I be required to provide at Expression of Interest (EOI) stage?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Expression of Interest Stage | Information you will need to provide:     * Organisation contact details * Who your specific audience is and what you know about them * The experience you and your partners have of working with your chosen audience and volunteering/social action * Why your project is needed * Your project ideas, including who you will work with to deliver the project and what you want to achieve * What you will test and learn from your project and thoughts of how you could potentially replicate/ and or scale up your project. * How ready you and your partners are to deliver the project * Headline costs |

**13. What happens if I am successful at the Expression of Interest stage?**

Organisations invited to progress to Stage 2 will be given time to develop their project further before submitting a full application, which will require more detailed information including:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Stage 2 Application | * A full delivery plan and associated budget with details of what and how you will deliver your project to your specific audience (including recruitment and retention plans) * Targets for the project * Measurement and evaluation * How sustainability is being built into the approach * Letters of support from partners, including any partnership funding   The delivery plan for the **Potentials Fund** should also address the 6 principles of youth social action. |

**14. How will projects be assessed?**

The details you provide in your Expression of Interest form will be assessed the Assessment Criteria set out on page 30 of the Investment Guide. The criteria will be used to determine which organisations are invited to submit a full application.

We advise that you read these carefully and take them into consideration as you develop your proposals.

**15. When will we know whether or not our Expression of Interest has been successful?**

We will notify you of a decision on whether your Expression of Interest application has been successful or not before the end of June 2017.

*Those who are successful at this stage* will be invited to move forward to stage two of the selection process. We aim to make a decision on who has been selected for investment in September 2017.

**16. What are our chances of receiving funding?**

We anticipate receiving many more applications for both funds than we are able to support. It is important that you read the Investment Guide and Insight Guide thoroughly and respond to the guidance it contains as you develop your project ideas to increase your likelihood of success.

**D) Investment and Partnership funding**

**17. My organisation isn’t able to receive National Lottery Funding. Can I still apply and receive investment from a different Sport England source?**

The source of this investment is National Lottery Funding. We appreciate that some organisations are not able to receive lottery funding, for example for cultural reasons. We have limited flexibility on substituting lottery funding for exchequer funding so if this applies to you, please speak to us as you develop your project ideas so that we can provide you with the best advice.

**18. We would like to apply for an award of less than £50,000 or more than £150,000 to deliver our project. Can I apply for this?**

Under £50,000

We anticipate that delivering the outcomes, measuring the impact and generating learning will require in the region of £50,000 per year for three years. We will consider requests for less than £50,000, but you will need to make a strong case to show how your project will meet the required criteria, and be on a suitable scale to learn from. If you feel you can meet the objectives of the fund but require less than £50,000, we would encourage you to email [volunteering@sportengland.org](mailto:volunteering@sportengland.org) to discuss your idea.

Over £150,000

We would encourage you to contact us directly in the early stages of your project development if you intend to apply for more than £150,000 of investment from us. As funding is very limited you would need to make a very strong case for funding.

**19. Is partnership funding required?**

Partnership funding is an important way for you to demonstrate both your and other partners’ commitment to the project. We encourage you to explore opportunities for additional partner funding support in addition to Sport England’s funding. While some of this may be in kind, we would like to see a level of financial partnership funding which is appropriate to your organisation and the partners who may be supporting the project. We will be interested to hear your plans for partnership funding, if you are invited to submit a full application.

**20. Some of my partnership funding has come from an organisation that receives regular funding from Sport England such as a National Governing Body of Sport or County Sport Partnership. Can this count towards my partnership funding total?**

The basic principle is that we will not accept as partnership funding any investment which has been awarded by Sport England to other organisations.

For example, we will not accept as eligible partner funding any contributions from National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of sport or County Sport Partnerships (CSPs) where that funding forms part of the NGB’s or CSP’s core award from Sport England. You can use funds that they have been awarded or received from other organisations though. The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate where funding comes from.

**21. How is an in-kind contribution defined?**

In-kind funding is considered any contribution of goods, commodities, or services instead of money. To be eligible, the in-kind contribution must relate to project costs, which have to meet the relevant eligibility rules set out below:

* costs must be ‘additional’ i.e. above and beyond any existing provision
* all in-kind contributions must demonstrate they are part of the co-ordinated action plan and must be directly related to interventions and activity within the action plan
* all in-kind contributions must be a direct contribution towards eligible project costs
* partnership funding must be demonstrated up-front and cannot be done retrospectively.

An example would be the provision of a facility for physical activity by a partner to the project for free or at a discount from the normal market rate. The difference between the normal market rate and the actual amount charged would be an in-kind contribution.

**E) What can and cannot be funded**

**22.** **Can I apply to fund an existing project?**

We are unable to invest into any project which is already up and running in your area, or where funding has recently been withdrawn. If, however, you have insight or detailed evidence of a successful project, which can either be replicated in a different area or with a different audience, you can apply for funding.

**23. What costs are eligible?**

We will ask you for an estimated project cost for your project at the EOI stage to help us understand the size of the project that you want to deliver. If you are invited to progress to stage 2, you will then need to provide a budget for your whole project. Please refer to the Investment Guide page 24 for more information on what costs are eligible and ineligible.

If you have a specific query please contact the funding helpline team on 0345 8508 508

**24.** **Can I include management costs?**

Management costs can be included but they must be for the additional costs that this project has created and can be clearly evidenced. Acceptable examples include the employment of extra staff capacity to backfill any loss caused by a staff member managing your project or the extension of hours to an existing contract in order to provide management capacity.

The recruitment of staff and purchase of IT equipment can be funded if they are essential to the delivery of the programme.

You must ensure that costs are essential to the project’s success and provide strong evidence as to how these items will lead to the successful delivery of your outcomes. Any expenditure under these headings will be subject to a value for money assessment so applicants if invited to submit a full application are advised to show how they have calculated their costs.

If you have a specific query please contact the funding helpline team on 0345 8508 508.

**25. Can I give cash rewards and incentives to new volunteers?**

We cannot fund any cash incentives. If you would like to offer a cash incentive/reward to motivate new volunteers and/or sustain delivery you will need to identify the appropriate partnership funding to pay for this element of your project.

**26. Can funding be used to provide t-shirts/team bibs/hoodies for volunteers?**

Yes, this is possible, but must be reasonable. You would need to ensure all t-shirts etc are branded with our joint “Lottery Funded” Sport England logo. Full branding requirements will be shared with successful applicants.

If you have a specific query please contact the funding helpline team on 0345 8508 508.

**F) Expectations on successful applicants**

**27. Will we be required to display Sport England branding as condition of the award?**

If you receive funding, you will be required to use our joint “Lottery Funded” Sport England logo. Those awarded from the Potentials Fund will be required to use agreed #iwill, Lottery and Sport England logos. Your Award Agreement will contain the terms and conditions for use of the logo(s) with branding guidelines on how to use the various formats. For example, you must include the logo(s) on all publicity and marketing materials including website brochures, posters and leaflets. We will also provide guidance on how we want you to promote your award.

**28. How will project success be measured?**

We want to learn and understand more about how we should support young people and individuals from economically disadvantaged communities into volunteering and social action. We want to learn what approaches work and why, but also what is less effective or doesn’t work.

We will work with all organisations who receive funding to identify the most appropriate evaluation and measurement priorities method of evaluation so the results and learning can be of benefit to both parties.

More details on monitoring and evaluation can be found on page 25 of the Investment Guide. We recommend that you read this and take it into account as you develop your project ideas.

**G) Advice and Support**

**29. Is there any further support available?**

The [Volunteering Insight Guide](https://www.sportengland.org/media/11562/volunteering-funding-investment-guide.pdf) contains useful insight and guidance which you are encouraged to review and consider as you develop your project.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your idea, you can contact our helpline on 0345 8508 508 or email us at volunteering@sportengland.org for any further guidance.