

# Commissioning Specification

## LAA 55-08 Operation of a Community Grants Scheme 2008-09

**Expressions of Interest** are invited from potential Delivery Agents for:

### **Operation of a Community Grants Scheme 2008-09**

#### **1. Introduction**

The Community Engagement Commissioning Group, (CECG), was established by The Oldham Partnership, under the auspices of the Local Area Agreement's Safer and Stronger Communities Block, to take responsibility for the approval and implementation of cohesion, engagement and cultural activity work commissioned under Oldham's Local Area Agreement, (LAA).

In 2007/08, the CECG commissioned two grants schemes, 'Global Grants' and 'Community Engagement Grants', in pursuit of its community engagement objectives. The success of both schemes, which were operated by the Communities Unit and aimed at voluntary sector groups and community organisations, highlighted the demand for such grants.

Currently, there are opportunities for Oldham groups to apply for grants from a variety of sources. However, many voluntary and community groups have no formal constitution or bank account, which can be a barrier in terms of accessing such funds. Therefore, following the submission of a Business Case by Oldham Council's Communities Unit, the CECG, at its meeting on October 15<sup>th</sup> 2008, agreed to commission a new Community Grants Scheme, which will be operated by an independent Delivery Agent. (N.B. the CECG has since been disbanded and its functions have been taken over temporarily by the Strong Communities Strategy Group).

The underlying aim of the Community Grants Scheme is to assist eligible groups to contribute to these Local Area Agreement National Indicators:

- **NI 6** Participation in regular volunteering
- **NI 7** Environment for a thriving Third Sector
- **NI 8** Adult participation in sport and active recreation
- **NI 11** Engagement in the arts

Therefore, in terms of the National Indicators detailed above, the Community Grants Scheme will enable eligible groups to do the following:

- Provide opportunities for local people to participate in activities
- Continue the provision of existing activities for local people
- Expand existing activities for local people
- Undertake new activities
- Meet the costs involved in setting up a new group
- Purchase equipment for use in community-based activity

The intended beneficiaries will be **small voluntary sector and community-based organisations, which operate within the Borough of Oldham with total funds of less than £20,000 at their disposal during this financial year.** The Community Grants Scheme will focus in particular on targeting new and embryonic groups. New groups will be defined as those which have come into being in the twelve months immediately preceding the commencement of the Community Grants Scheme.

Groups, at the time when they apply for grants, will therefore not need to have a formal constitution or bank account, although any award of a grant will obviously necessitate the setting up of a bank account. **The maximum grant available will be £3,000.** No group will be eligible for more than one grant.

It is expected that the Community Grants Scheme will deliver the following Outputs:

<b>Output Description</b>	<b>Annual Total – (BME figures in brackets)</b>
Number of grants awarded	<b>24 (minimum)</b>
Number of groups benefiting from grant assistance	<b>24 (minimum)</b>
Number of individuals taking part in regular, (at least once per month), volunteering activity as a result of grant assistance	<b>120 (24)</b>
Number of adults participating in sports as a result of grant assistance	<b>270 (30)</b>
Number of adults participating in arts activities as a result of grant assistance	<b>200 (35)</b>
Scheme evaluation/final report produced	<b>1</b>

**Expressions of Interest** are therefore invited from potential Delivery Agents for:

## **Operation of a Community Grants Scheme 2008-09**

**N.B.**

- **£80,000** has been allocated to this Commissioned Activity

**N.B. A maximum of £8,000 only** can be deployed to cover the operational costs of delivering the Community Grants Scheme. All remaining funds, **(at least £72,000)** will be available to be allocated as grants for eligible groups.

- The Commissioned Activity must be completed **by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009**
- The intellectual property rights of material, associated information and all reports specifically produced for, and resulting from, this Commissioned Activity will belong to the Oldham Partnership.

### **Role of the Delivery Agent**

The successful Delivery Agent will be responsible for the following:

- Managing the Community Grants Scheme in its entirety
- Producing publicity material and undertaking effective promotional activity to raise awareness and ensure widespread take-up of the Community Grants Scheme
- Designing, producing and distributing appropriate documentation, (eligibility criteria, guidance notes, grant application forms, asset register forms etc)
- Providing a point of contact for grant applicants
- Setting up, organising, servicing and documenting Community Grants Panels, (comprised of impartial members with relevant expertise)
- Communicating Community Grants Panel decisions to successful and unsuccessful applicants
- Dealing with all queries, enquiries and correspondence relating to the Community Grants Scheme
- Maintaining adequate records for each grant awarded in terms of its deployment, impact and outcomes
- Collating relevant information and submitting Quarterly Monitoring Returns to the LAA Commissioning Unit
- Completing an end of scheme evaluation for the commissioning body

## 2. Programme Specification

Elements of the Activity to be Commissioned	OPERATION OF A COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME 2008-09
<p>ESTABLISHING, PUBLICISING, IMPLEMENTING, MANAGING, MONITORING, AND EVALUATING A COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME UNTIL 31 MARCH 2009</p>	<p><i>The Community Engagement Commissioning Group has no wish to be prescriptive about the approach to delivering this activity and its content and scope. However, it is envisaged that potential Delivery Agents will address the following issues as a matter of course in formulating their Expressions of Interest:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The approach to be adopted in publicising the Community Grants Scheme to potential beneficiaries – channels of communication, type of promotional material to be used, methods to be employed, coverage to be achieved in order to stimulate applications from <b>small voluntary sector organisations and community groups, which operate within the Borough of Oldham with total funds of less than £20,000 at their disposal during this financial year.</b> Eligible groups will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embryonic groups</li> <li>New groups, (in existence for less than 12 months)</li> <li>Groups without constitutions and/or bank accounts</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The way in which a point of contact will be provided for grant applicants throughout the operation of the Community Grants Scheme</li> <li>• Details of the documentation to be used in relation to the grants application process – guidance notes, application forms, eligibility criteria, application forms, appeals etc</li> <li>• The proposed membership and composition of Community Grants Panels – timetable for Panel meetings, procedures for assessing grant applications and informing applicants of results, records to be kept</li> <li>• The processes for dealing with enquiries, correspondence etc</li> <li>• The nature of the records that will be kept in relation to grant applications received, Community Grants Panel meetings and proceedings, grants awarded, appeals etc</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information that will be kept regarding each Community Grant awarded – details of successful applicants, usage of grant, activities undertaken, beneficiaries involved, outputs achieved etc.</li> <li>• The type of information that will be collated for inclusion in the Quarterly Monitoring Returns to be submitted to the LAA Commissioning Unit</li> <li>• The nature, scope, timing and content of the evaluation that will be undertaken at the termination of the Community Grants Scheme</li> </ul>
Partnership Working	The successful Delivery Agent will be expected to cooperate and collaborate, where appropriate, with other Delivery Agents undertaking activity commissioned on behalf of the Oldham Partnership
Duration of programme	The Commissioned Activity must be completed by <b>31<sup>st</sup> March 2009</b> .
Deadline for receipt of Expressions of Interest	Potential Delivery Agents are invited to submit Expressions of Interest for undertaking the Commissioned Activity by <b>4.00 pm Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2008</b> .
Area Based Grant Funds available	<b>£80,000 of Area Based Grant</b> has been allocated to this Commissioned Activity. <b>N.B. A maximum of £8,000 only</b> can be deployed to cover the operational costs of delivering the Community Grants Scheme. All remaining funds, <b>(at least £72,000)</b> will be available to be allocated as grants for eligible
Intellectual Property Rights	The intellectual property rights of material, associated information and all reports <u>specifically produced for, and resulting from</u> , this Commissioned Activity will belong to the Oldham Partnership.

### **3. Further Information**

In formulating Expressions of Interest, potential Delivery Agents should bear in mind that the Strong Communities Assessment Panel, which will consider their submissions, will expect to see the following detail:

- Measurable, quantifiable Outputs, which demonstrate the effectiveness, scope and scale of the work undertaken
- A fully costed Expenditure Profile, which demonstrates value for money and effective use of financial resources. **The profile must clearly identify the expenditure categories relating to the management / operating costs of the Community Grants Scheme.**
- A work schedule, which shows clearly how the Commissioned Activity will be completed within the designated time scale
- Contingency plans / risk assessments to cover eventualities such as the departure or sickness of key staff during delivery of the Commissioned Activity
- Evidence that equality and diversity issues have been taken into account in planning the delivery of the Commissioned Activity

#### **4. Deadline for Submission of Expressions of Interest**

Electronic versions of the Expressions of Interest should be submitted on the template provided and e-mailed to:

**dave.catherall@oldham.gov.uk**

In addition, a **hand-signed**, hard copy of the Expression of Interest, (on the template provided), must be sent to the address listed below.

All Expressions of Interest, (electronic and hard copy version) **must be received by 4.00 pm Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2008**. Submissions received after the stated deadline will not be considered.

It is the responsibility of the potential Delivery Agent to ensure that a signed, hard copy of their Expression of Interest has been received at the following address within the stated deadline.

Private and Confidential  
(LAA 55-08 CGS)  
Dave Catherall  
LAA Commissioning Unit  
Level 2  
Oldham Business Centre  
Cromwell Street  
Oldham  
OL1 1BB

All Expressions of Interest received from potential Delivery Agents within the stated deadline will be considered by an Assessment Panel, which will meet during the week commencing **December 15<sup>th</sup> 2008**.

Applicants will be informed of the Assessment Panel's decisions within 21 days of the Assessment Panel meeting.