



Summary report of Round 3 projects

The third round of funding intends to support projects that increase the capacity of the sector to respond to the recession, specifically under the following three strands of activity:

1. **Financial Inclusion** – projects which strengthen the affordable credit sector, particularly in terms of increasing access to affordable credit for disadvantaged and excluded groups and individuals.
2. **Mergers and Formal Collaboration** – projects that create and stimulate a 'market place' for mergers and collaboration between Third Sector Organisations, as a means of reducing grant dependency, preparing for commissioning and enabling the sector to win and deliver public service contracts.
3. **Equality of Economic Opportunity** – projects that provide support to the seven diversity groups (children and young people, disability, faith, gender, older age, race and LGBT) to ensure they are not further marginalised from economic opportunity as a result of the recession. In particular, this strand wishes to support projects which are focused on maximising the opportunities from existing or planned regional investment as well as programmes such as the Innovation Connectors, Strategy for Success and Three Pillars.

A total of 50 EOIs were received, 19 of which were invited to submit a full application. Of these, the following four projects were approved for funding:

Connect2work – Tackling Ethnic Minority Unemployment

BECON's **Connect2work** project is based on recommendations from the National Audit Office (NAO) report *Increasing Employment Rates for Ethnic Minorities* (2008) and recommendations proposed by University of Northumbria (UoN) research report *Closing the Ethnic Employment Gap in the North East* (2008) commissioned by the Evidence Task Group of the North East Equality and Diversity Partnership (NEEDP).

The **Connect2work** project will:

- resource and develop a regional approach to redress the labour market disadvantages experienced by the region's BME communities in line with key recommendation from UoN report

- deliver tailored employability services to **300** individuals from different BME communities in the region facing exclusion from the labour market
- strengthen engagement of **30** frontline BME third sector organisations with deliverers of employability services in four localities – Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Stockton and Sunderland
- deliver capacity building work with **30** BME TS organisations to support their engagement with Innovation Connectors programme for an informed service provision on future employment to their members, especially young people
- engage with regional organisations like Job Centre+, CfBT Advice & Guidance Ltd, private recruitment agencies and employer organisations on employment related areas, particularly on:

Sustainable Information, advice and guidance service - by developing a centrally managed information service to disseminate information on skills/training/employment opportunities to the BME third sector for its ongoing service provision on employment support to its members

Employability training provision - BECON's recent research on impact of recession on the BME third sector has revealed that BME third sector organisations are providing employment related services to their members. A large part of this service is being provided by volunteers. This project will develop and deliver a skills and training package to BME third sector organisations across the region

Scaling up the Sector – Moneywise Newcastle Credit Union

This project is designed to stimulate the affordable credit sector in the north east. Building on our strong sector leadership, infrastructure and consultancy expertise, we will provide the equivalent of 80 hours per week staffing for the period of the project to support the North East credit unions. We will create a resource pool that will allow organisations to bid into for individual requirements.

The activities will vary according to need. Likely activities include: providing expertise to submit regulatory reports, producing management information, policy development or maintaining accounts. Alternatively it could provide 5 -10 hours per week for a limited period of time to establish new systems and procedures where a credit union does not have the resources or funds to employ a staff member. Within the project we will provide approximately 40 hours to a credit control function and employ a trainee credit controller to work with our own existing officer. This part of the project addresses a clearly identified skills and systems gap for the sector.

By providing a professional attitude to credit union members in the region this will enhance the existing capacity of current staff and volunteers within the sector.

As part of the project we will explore with a local provider online access to credit union members accounts. By creating and fostering links with credit unions in the region the project will promote closer collaboration and sharing of back office

functions and systems.

The project will receive supervision and management from our senior staff who will also evaluate the project and produce a report for the sector at the end.

Business Action on Homelessness – The Cyrenians

The project will deliver Business Action on Homelessness in the North East region working in partnership with national charity Business in the Community, and its company members in the North East. Business Action on Homelessness works with business to enable homeless people and those at risk of homelessness to gain and sustain employment. The campaign is business led and is chaired by John Varley, Group CEO Barclays.

By helping people into sustained employment through our Ready for Work programme, Business Action on Homelessness helps to prevent the revolving door of repeat presentations and endemic homelessness. We believe that businesses should be part of the solution - not just because it's the right thing to do, but because this offers clear business benefits. Businesses can offer unique support through employee volunteering, work placements, training and employment.

There are a number of companies including Carillion, Barclays, KPMG, Royal Mail, Marks & Spencer, Greggs, EDF Energy and Mitie, who have already committed to offering placements, and this project aims to build the capacity within the sector to find, train and select service users from third sector organisations through the process of obtaining and maintaining permanent employment in order to sustain a fulfilling life.

Employment is one of a range of support types which people often need, and by using 24 (the Manchester programme cited this as an optimum number of Third Sector Organisations to effectively support) charities to act as conduits for this programme, we aim to ensure that the individuals in the programme have the necessary support around them, whether that be mental health provision, abstinence support, or tenancy sustainment support.

Commissioning and Consortia Building Project for the CYPF Sector (CCCYCP) – Children England

The aim of this project is to improve the engagement of the Children, Young People & Families Third Sector Organisations in the design and delivery of the commissioning process and explore means of building consortia in the North East for small/medium TSO's.

Objectives:

- To identify local and regional needs around engaging in the commissioning process.

- To facilitate opportunities to address identified need.
- To promote the use of outcomes focused work, planning & accountability within TSO's.
- To support the sector to market their services effectively and provide joint opportunities with statutory partners to increase levels of understanding and cooperation.
- To lobby and influence local and regional government around the commissioning agenda to ensure TSO's can contribute and engage as an equal partner
- To identify local and regional needs around collaboration and consortia building
- To build four different examples of consortia across the region

The project will develop the above objectives working in partnership with local and regional partners; this will include commissioners from all areas including health, social care, education and private providers. It is envisaged that this will provide an opportunity to explore the challenges and solutions to local or regional issues, create a resource around best practice and offer the opportunity to share this learning out across other partners. There will be a strong focus on building links with resources and opportunities that already exist and encouraging and supporting the sector to access these. This work will be supported by the current VCS Engage project and its steering group with the recruitment of a skilled and experienced project worker to link this with the consortia and mergers element of the project.

Round 3 Summary

| Project | Grant | Leverage | Strand |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| BECON | £149,792 | £43,500 | Equality of Economic Opportunity |
| The Cyrenians | £96,469 | £312,207 | Equality of Economic Opportunity |
| Moneywise Credit Union | £145,047 | £78,108 | Financial Inclusion |
| Children England | £135,000 | £20,000 | Mergers and Formal Collaboration |
| Total | £526,308 | £453,815 | |

Round 3 Project Outputs

| | Jobs created | Jobs safeguarded | Skills | Employment Support | TSOs supported |
|------------------|--------------|------------------|------------|--------------------|----------------|
| BECON | | | 30 | 300 | 30 |
| The Cyrenians | 16 | 16 | 62 | 140 | 50 |
| Moneywise | 2 | 2 | 50 | | 8 |
| Children England | 1 | 40 | 100 | | 40 |
| Total | 19 | 58 | 242 | 440 | 128 |