

Guidelines for council endorsement of funding bids

Background

1. In the last year there have been funding programmes aimed at voluntary and community organisations where government departments/independent funders stipulate applications for funding will not be accepted without local authority approval.
2. The council wants to maximise the chances of successful applications. These guidelines aim to provide greater clarity and transparency for the VCS and the council and reflect what is already happening.
3. These are a general guide for what will be taken into account and what needs to happen before the local authority will endorse an application. They also describe how co-ordination and communications take place.
4. The two main situations where a local authority endorsement is required are:
 - Where only one bid per local authority area will be considered
 - Where bids will only be considered if supported by the local authority – a number of bids can be supported

What the council will consider – principles and process

One bid per area

5. Council officers may not be aware of the funding opportunity/ criteria. It is important that where an endorsement is needed, early notice is provided of an intention to develop a bid to officers.
6. If the council is made aware that one or more than one bid is in development officers will contact the lead organisations and subject to their agreement pass on contact details so that they contact each other. Organisations themselves can ideally come to an agreement about the next steps without the need for council involvement. Support is available from Community Southwark to broker this. <http://communitysouthwark.org/>
This could result in the following:
 - A joint bid being submitted incorporating all interested parties with agreement on the lead bid organisation
 - Withdrawal of one or more of the bids
 - Separate bids needing endorsement through a competitive process
7. If the council has to chose between more than one application what factors are taken into account in reaching a decision?

- Does it address needs and evidence what impact it will deliver – reference to Southwark Common Outcomes Framework, Age Friendly Borough, Council Plan?
- Is the applicant known to the council and what intelligence is there about the organisation e.g. funding or network relationship or is providing services and there are no significant reputational risks?
- Is it a partnership application developed through a collaborative open process where consensus has been reached on the project lead body?
- Is it from a partnership working closely with the council/other statutory bodies/business?
- Has there been contact with appropriate VCS organisations and networks e.g. thematic Provider Led Groups, Community Southwark, lead provider organisations in existing consortia?

Where more than one bid is allowed for each local authority area

8. The council will support one/ or more of the strongest bids after evaluation and brief due diligence.
9. Where endorsement is required and more than one bid can be submitted commissioning officers/policy leads made of representatives from the council's departments will consider which to approve. These include:
 - Communities Division
 - Children's & Adult Services
 - Chief Executives Office

The recommendation and reasons will be passed on for approval by the VCS Strategic Commissioning Board.

10. Officers will not generally support bids that duplicate other ones and will suggest that the bids are merged.

Support from council for bids going forward

11. If stage 1 bid is successful the council will communicate to lead partner/s that any support will need to be appropriately defined and scoped especially in terms of intelligence/data / officer time where possible and this support is factored into the funding resource. Given the stretch on council resources, any additional support in terms of facilitation, use of assets and wider co-ordination work will require appropriate discussion prior to agreement.

Who to contact within the council/VCS to notify of development of bid and for endorsement?

Southwark Council Communities Division: Andrew Matheson

andrew.matheson@southwark.gov.uk 020 7525 7648 CVSSU@southwark.gov.uk for notification and bid endorsement

Community Southwark Truly Johnston truly@communitysouthwark.org for brokering and co-ordination within the VCS