



EXPANDING HORIZONS

e-NETWORK NEWS

FEBRUARY 2006

Welcome to the latest edition of e-Network News, this edition focuses solely on Social Capital funding, which includes;

- social capital fund
- contact details
- case studies
- partnership
- evaluation
- future events

<SOCIAL CAPITAL FUND>

Since January 2001 Expanding Horizons has been running a Social Capital project that is part funded by ESF. Grants are awarded to voluntary and community organisations and groups working with excluded groups, for small amounts of money (£500-£5,000) to support innovative/capacity building activities which help the organisation to 'grow'.

Expanding Horizons Social Capital funding supports the development and growth of individual small voluntary and community organisations and groups. It helps organisations develop a good track record and eventually apply for other funding in their own right. It is primarily, but not exclusively, concerned with providing support for new and emerging organisations. Existing

organisations are also encouraged to apply for support for new/innovative activities.

Social Capital funding supports a broad range of projects that encourage community economic regeneration, capacity building, volunteering opportunities and other initiatives that strengthen the local community and help it become self-supporting. This includes activities that help develop peoples skills so that they are able to access training, education and employment opportunities. It also includes activities, which aid community and voluntary groups to develop their skills so that they can take a more active role in society. Projects, which include physical regeneration making local areas more attractive to live and work in, are also encouraged.

These are broad principles but we realise that community economic regeneration involves many other activities and we welcome other new and innovative ideas.

Since the project began we have funded 282 organisations to carry a broad range of activities such as:

- Activities which increase skills and improve opportunities for disadvantaged groups
- Start up funding for small projects
- Projects assisting people into employment
- Purchase of small items of equipment of direct benefit to the project
- Activities to encourage volunteering

The funding is for organisations and groups with a constitution and membership, which work with excluded groups.

<CONTACT DETAILS>

Robert Brewis is the Project Support Worker; you can contact him to help with project development and approaching Expanding Horizons to receive funding.

Alison Hunt is the Programme & Finance Assistant; you can contact her for guidelines and an application form.

Alternatively, you can download the guidelines and application form from our website, via the 'Links' page - sub menu 'Downloads'.

Merseyside Expanding Horizons
6th Floor, Cotton Exchange, Old Hall Street, Liverpool, L3 9LQ.
Telephone: (0151) 330 0552 Fax: (0151) 284 2674
Email: info@expandinghorizons.co.uk
Website: www.expandinghorizons.co.uk

<CASE STUDIES>

We have selected a small sample of case studies from a broad and diverse range of projects, from all five boroughs' of Merseyside, that have been funded by the Social Capital programme.

Stick 'n' Step is Wirral based charity providing conductive education (a specialist therapy – a system of learning developed at the Peto Institute in Hungary) to children of school age with Cerebral Palsy.

The funding was given to provide conductive education free of charge at a Saturday school for school age children who cannot attend during the week. This funding benefited children who are at crucial stages in their National Curriculum, i.e. SATS years or first years at senior school. It also benefits the parents/carers as a support network.

The number of children attending the school and conductors has more than doubled, some children have gone into mainstream schools and one has gone on to college. The group plan to eventually have a purpose built centre.

Chara Trust is a Liverpool based charity, as their Mission Statement states, they are an empowering development agency committed to inspiring community regeneration; providing quality projects, project development, training, advice and information to enable groups and individuals to prosper. The funding was given to extend the Business Planning project to enable more participants to benefit from a training programme. The training included needs analysis, workshops, one-to-one support to produce plans for community organisations and under-represented groups including refugees, asylum seekers, domestic violence and family support groups, childcare, youth and resident groups.

The Trust has recently expanded their community resource services by moving into a purpose built 'Community Access Point' with a street-level access for community groups.

The Wirral 3L's (Leisure, Laughter, Learning for the over 50's) have recently become a registered charity after being formed for over 10 years. They are a community project offering a range of leisure and learning opportunities. They run courses from Spanish to Yoga, no exams are taken and they work on the principle of life long learning. They also hold social events from dining clubs to theatre trips.

The funding was awarded to develop a volunteering programme, increase the community's awareness of the group and purchase equipment for training courses.

The group provided a training programme for volunteers with supporting materials for courses; publicity materials included a leaflet drop and advert, and purchased equipment for tutoring.

Not only residents of Wirral who are over 50 but people come from all over Merseyside and some who are under 50 are members of the 3L's.

Since being funded, the volunteers have gained confidence and provide a professional service, membership has increased and it has enhanced the learning experience for all.

Liverpool City Mission was formed in 1829 to help people in poverty. The beneficiaries of the project are the homeless, sex workers, refugees, drug and alcohol mis-users, people with mental health problems and anyone in need. The group help 40-70 people per day and is keeping people alive by the provision of food and clothes. Others have been encouraged into rehabilitation. They provide many opportunities for people to volunteer. The money from Expanding Horizons was used to install a shower unit, PC and industrial equipment for washing and cleaning. The group has seen successes and difficulties. But continues to provide a well-used and dependable service.

Crownway Community Centre is a group from Earlestown Baptist Church near St Helens. The grant was used to establish a community café, providing furniture, utensils and necessary equipment for the kitchen. The group uses the café to work with the disabled, the elderly, lonely, unemployed, mothers and toddlers, the bereaved, people attending diagnostic clinics and single parents. The café offers a safe, secure and caring environment for people to meet in and has been a great success.

Chrysalis is based in Dovecot. They support women and families fleeing domestic violence. Providing aftercare, court support, counselling and self-esteem through holistic therapies. The grant was used for rent for office space, computers – from which volunteers can learn and use the Internet. Refurbishment of a therapy room, window blinds, childcare and travel expenses. The group provide training that is help women move towards self-employment. The course has been a great success and many of the women love the course and have progressed onto a business course with a view to self-employment.

West Lancashire Yacht Club is a group near Southport. Was set up to encourage and expand sailing and power boating. They received a grant to help them develop this amongst disabled people. There have been some great successes since they received the money including blind children driving powerboats and an 82-year-old lady with learning disabilities learning to sail. In the future they hope to set up a group for disadvantaged people to go sailing and enjoy powerboat and yachts.

Molyneux Drive Allotment Association in conjunction with local residents of the area in Knowsley developed an unused site into a community garden/green space for educational use. The funding was awarded to develop and landscape the area. Landscaping included the installation of wheelchair suitable paths, dipping platforms, seat and raised planters for use by people with disabilities. By recruiting the help of Groundwork's Green Apprentices they were given the opportunity to experience habitat creation whilst working alongside the local community and therefore developing team-building and social skills. Local residents, schools, youth groups and members of the disability forum are the beneficiaries from this funding.

<PARTNERSHIP>

Social Capital programmes were established and have operated across Merseyside since 2001. They are:

- Community Foundation for Merseyside (CFM) – who developed the South Sefton Key Fund.
- Merseyside Disability Federation (MDF) – who developed the Social Risk Capital Fund.
- Merseyside Expanding Horizons (MEH) – who developed the Social Capital Fund.
- St Helens Council – who developed the St Helens Community Opportunities Fund.

Although each of the social risk capital funds developed at slightly different points in time, the organisations involved did enter into early stage discussions to ensure that, where possible, the development of the four funds would be as coherent as possible.

The Merseyside Disability Federation Social Risk Capital Fund covered all of Merseyside and was specifically for organisations consisting of or for disabled people. Merseyside Expanding Horizons covered Liverpool, Knowsley, Sefton and Wirral whereas the St Helens and Community Foundation for Merseyside programmes covered St Helens and South Sefton respectively.

However in 2004 discussions on the future delivery of Social capital began between the four partnership organisations and Government Office North West as funders. Applications were sought to deliver the Social Capital programme until the end of the current Objective One programming period. It was also decided that a new programme would be developed to provide Social Capital grants relating to the 2008 Capital of Culture activities and that this programme would be open to all five boroughs.

In 2004 we commissioned a joint evaluation of the programmes as part of this process (see below for details) and as part of the brief we looked at ways of strengthening the partnership working, in order to offer a stronger more coherent service.

At this time the South Sefton Key fund was due to end along with the St Helens Communities Opportunities fund. In the new arrangement these activities are now offered through the MEH Social Capital fund, which covers all five boroughs.

CFM became the accountable body for the Capital of Culture programme and work in partnership with Liverpool Centre for Arts Development who provides outreach support. MDF continue to run their programme as before.

The partnership working is now much stronger holding regular meetings and joint panels, sharing information and panel members' expertise, joint working on information dissemination, seminars and presentations etc. This has led to more effective delivery of social capital funding across Merseyside.

<EVALUATION>

Merseyside Social Capital Programmes

With the current Merseyside Objective One programme drawing to a close in December 2006, the four Global Grants partners decided to carry out an independent evaluation of the four operational social risk capital programmes to assess the impact and outcomes of the programmes, evaluate processes and procedures and identify good practice arising from their implementation.

The evaluation revealed that the four social risk capital programmes fulfilled a unique role in Merseyside by acting as a catalyst for change and enabling groups to access funding to develop a myriad of projects that tackle social exclusion.

It was also found that without the existence of these programmes it is unlikely that such a diverse range of innovative projects and services could have been developed.

The evaluation found that social risk capital programmes in Merseyside have, since 2001, invested over £4 million in the development of a local social capital infrastructure in the form of small, and often, start up grants, has enabled 469 groups and projects to develop and deliver services. (At September 2004).

Target Groups and Beneficiaries

A review of the projects supported through the social risk capital programmes revealed that the projects and groups supported have focused their activities upon those individuals and communities that are most at risk of exclusion and who are a priority for the Objective One Programme.

Access to Funding

The development of social risk capital programmes has enabled new access arrangements that are specifically targeted at those organisations looking to access EU funding for the first time and has supported those organisations to develop their capacity and capability, in other words a track record, to manage public sector funding.

Promoting Innovation and Filling Gaps in Service Provision

A review of the projects visited as part of the evaluation illustrated that a substantial number of projects and services have been developed to address a particular need and to fill gaps in service provision locally especially where there were no existing support arrangements and many of the groups have subsequently entered into Service Level Agreements or have secured

additional grant funding or contracts with local authorities, Primary Care Trusts and the local Learning & Skills Council.

Cost Effectiveness & Generation of Added Value

Many of the groups that have been assisted have developed new volunteering opportunities for local residents which has provided such individuals with an opportunity to develop new skills and has also assisted in the development of locally delivered, needs led and cost effective services.

Outputs

Each project supported by the four social risk capital programmes is different in nature and focus. However, the evaluation revealed that there is clear evidence of projects supporting the creation of new jobs, volunteering opportunities, access to learning and delivery of training and qualifications.

<FUTURE EVENTS>

During the year Expanding Horizons will be running two events that will help Social Capital recipients to strengthen their groups and gain access to greater funding.

The first event in May, is 'Ask the Expert' an event on moving from being a voluntary organisation to a social enterprise.

The following event in September will be around 'Sport & Inclusion'; this will be a day of seminars looking at how to become a sustainable sports group dealing with issues of funding, recruitment and growth.

If you are interested in either of these events, please contact Robert at robertbrewis@expandinghorizons.co.uk or telephone (0151) 330 0552.