Innovation Fund –Guidance Notes v2

A separate innovation fund was agreed during the Health and Social Care Grants review in 2018 .The main aim of the fund is to encourage creative and innovative ideas which may have less of a track record. This fund has been co-produced with members from the 3rd sector. Applicants must be based in Edinburgh, with the lead organisation being in the 3rd sector.

The priorities of this new innovation grant fund programme align to the new Strategic Plan 2019-22 and will focus specifically on tackling inequalities, prevention and early intervention and addressing the supporting themes of the plan:

**Supporting themes:**

* + a deliberate shift to early intervention and prevention, building independence and resilience at individual and community level
  + working across life stages and ages to create more cohesive and seamless services
  + service users empowered to design their own care (through the design of services and the consistent use of good conversations)
  + resources joined up and working together both within and across our localities and the third and independent sectors
  + people gain access to resources and services in a timely manner.
  + third sector services in communities are supported to meet the needs of people who fall below statutory criteria
  + people know what services are available and how to access these services, ideally through a single point of contact
  + service users are involved in the planning of services that affect them
  + carers are supported to carry out their role in a way that supports the carers health and wellbeing
  + success is demonstrated based on a range of measures including outcomes for people

The fund has a total of £300k to be distributed and spent between now and end of March 2022. Whilst there are no specific minimum or maximum award levels, it is likely that awards of around £10k will be made. If the fund is not all allocated during this first call for applications, there may be a second call in due course.

We are particularly interested in supporting smaller, under-resourced organisations, as we know that in our experience smaller organisations are particularly well-placed to deliver positive change because they know their communities and can be highly responsive to need, providing an individualised and holistic response to the people they support. The best smaller-scale organisations also encourage participation and inclusion and contribute to the resilience of communities by offering opportunities for connection and engagement. We are therefore much more likely to fund groups with an annual income of less than £1 million. We are looking for a balance of city wide and local projects.

We need you to be able to describe a problem or an issue you are facing and how you propose to resolve it. We see this fund being used to test and learn and that sharing of learning experiences will be expected. There will be an emphasis on collaboration in order to champion innovation. Innovation does not have to mean brand new.

We wish to use the following definitions of Prevention and Early Intervention:

* *Prevention is about intervening before something becomes a problem*
* *Early Intervention is about responding where there is already a problem*

As we expect to receive more applications than we can fund we have a straightforward two-stage application process designed to reduce the time and effort organisations spend on their first approach to us. Stage 1 is the completion of a 2-page application form, including a description of the project to be funded (in no more than 1000 words). If successful in stage 1, stage 2 will be a presentation or pitch to the panel who will also ask questions and discuss the proposal in more depth. The pitches and answers to questions will be assessed and scored with the best proposals being recommended for funding. At this stage, the organisations who will receive the funding will be asked to submit their detailed delivery plan, including costings, activities, volumes, outputs as well as detailed impacts. As this fund is all about innovation , we will not fund core costs nor capital costs ( exception might be up to £1k on small scale equipment ? IT ?). We may consider funding a very small % of core staffing costs if the applicant can demonstrate the need for this.

The Innovation fund application process will go live on 15th October 2019. Informal briefing (drop in) sessions will be held for those interested in applying in October, with closing date for applications being 30th November 2019. Those selected for the pitch will be notified by Monday 16th December 2019 with the pitches taking place week commencing 20th January 2020. Successful organisations will be informed by 31st January 2020.