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# ***Generations Together***

## **A Demonstrator programme of intergenerational practice**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **General**

##### **What do you mean by 'Intergenerational Practice'?**

We use the term "intergenerational practice" to describe 'older' (over 50) and 'younger' people (under 25) interacting in mutually beneficial activities. Underpinning this definition are two main strands:

- a) ***Family based interaction***, typically between a child or young person and a family member of their grandparents' generation; and
- b) ***Intergenerational volunteering***, which could be one generation assisting or imparting knowledge to the other, or alternatively young and old involved in an activity on an equal basis.

The focus of this programme is on intergenerational volunteering, and proposals will need to concentrate on this type of interaction, although proposals that include some elements of encouraging family based intergenerational interaction will be considered

##### **Why is the Government interested in this now?**

2008 marked something of a turning point in social history. Young people under the age of 16 were outnumbered by those over the age of 65 for the first time. This demographic shift will continue, and it is likely to have profound consequences for the way in which generations interact.

It is important that a widening demographic gap does not become a widening emotional gap. Increasing intergenerational activity and developing innovative ways for younger and older people to interact and come to better understand each other, will help reverse this breakdown in social cohesion.

With this kind of demographic change it is also important that we harness the capacity within local communities. Providing opportunities for the growing number of older people to make a positive contribution through intergenerational initiatives is beneficial for both their wellbeing and that of younger people.

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## **Why is the Government involved in this at all? Older and younger people get together all the time without any help from the state.**

The vast majority of intergenerational activity stems from local projects, organised by local people – of course this is how it should be, for it is local communities that know what activities best support local needs and local priorities. We want to encourage this type of innovation. But, very often, for these excellent local projects to be sustainable, they need some form of moderate financial support to survive. The robust evaluation of this programme will help those interested in developing intergenerational activity to decide what type of intergenerational activity has the greatest impact in changing younger and older people's perceptions, and improving outcomes for young and old.

## **Who is going to benefit most from this kind of thing?**

Intergenerational activity benefits everybody. It can be a key element in helping people from different ages and backgrounds feel like they are part of the same community, appreciate their similarities, and respect their differences. All generations should, in theory, benefit from engaging with each other on equal terms, breaking down barriers and challenging negative stereotypes.

But intergenerational activity can also have a more profound impact on particular individuals. For some younger people, having that meaningful interaction with an older person provides them with a valued mentor who can help them navigate the sometimes tricky road of growing up; for some older people, having meaningful interaction with a younger person encourages them to keep active, and engaged in their community when they might otherwise have withdrawn following retirement. Attitude changes in younger people can also result in older people being treated with greater dignity and equally help adults to have greater respect and appreciation of young people

## **Generations Together – Programme**

### **Why does this need to be led by local authorities? Third sector organisations are the ones with the expertise.**

We believe that the best approach to achieving the aims of the programme is a partnership approach between third sector organisations and local authorities. Both have a part to play in the programme and we want bids that demonstrate a genuine partnership approach, but we require local authorities to act as the accountable body for the funding. Providing a local authority lead is important if we are to see the development of a more strategic approach towards intergenerational work.

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### **There are other important stakeholders within local government – why do you require the ‘sign up’ for the bid to involve the Director of Children’s Services and Director of Adult Services?**

The proposals put forward in the bidding document need to have the maximum possible impact on outcomes for younger and older people. In order to do this, those who traditionally work with ‘the young’ and ‘the old’ need to be committed to work together throughout the project to ensure mutually beneficial outcomes. Without the support of these two senior officials, it will be extremely difficult to achieve, which is why we have required these two senior officials to signal their commitment.

### **Why are you not adhering to the funding timescales set out in the Compact?**

Funding given from central government to Local Authorities is not covered by the Compact. However, we have endeavoured to give Local Authorities as much time as possible to consult with Third Sector organisations.

### **Is it really possible to prove that intergenerational practice is effective in less than 2 years?**

Yes. We believe that it is very possible to track progress on a good number of the outcomes set out in the bidding document, particularly those which are about people’s attitudes. It is obviously more difficult to evaluate some of the longer term cultural changes and impacts on people’s wellbeing, however the pilot phase should give us some pointers to what approaches are more effective.

### **What do we do if we can’t get formal ‘sign up’ from all the third sector organisations we want to involve within the timescale?**

We are prepared to consider bids where there is ‘in principle’ support from third sector organisations, but these will need to demonstrate clearly how the local authority will secure formal sign up from third sector partners quickly.

### **Do we have to be able to provide matched funding?**

No, although there is an expectation that local authorities and their partners will deploy some of their own resources (this can include contributions ‘in kind’) to enhance the total capacity of the demonstrators. These resources might be deployed on project management or additional activity capacity. We will also look favourably on proposals that clearly signal how the area intends to continue to support intergenerational activity after the lifetime of this programme.

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### **What happens at the end of 2010-2011? Who is going to pick up the funding?**

This is partly answered in the question above. In addition to this, whilst it is not a strict requirement of the programme for activity to be continued beyond the life of the grant, we have nevertheless signalled quite clearly that we will favour those bids which show how they intend to make intergenerational work part of their strategic approach to promoting the wellbeing of their local community.

### **If we are successful in becoming a demonstrator site does this mean that we will have lots of requests from other local authorities or third sector organisations to come and visit us? If so, will there be additional funds to meet this pressure?**

There will be an expectation on successful areas that they share their experiences, and the learning from the projects with other interested authorities or third sector organisations and contribute to other mechanisms for distilling and disseminating best practice. There will be no additional funds to meet this pressure.

### **Does this programme apply to young people as well as children?**

Yes. We will expect the majority of the proposals to involve children and young people under the age of 19 (or older young people who suffer from disabilities). However, we do not expect local areas to exclude other young people (up to the age of 25) from projects that they want to be involved in simply because they have reached their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday!

### **What is your definition of an older person?**

For the purposes of this programme an older person is somebody over the age of 50. We are not suggesting this makes somebody 'old' – indeed one of the ambitions of the project is to utilise the talents of more experienced volunteers. However, it is at this age that adults might start to think about what to do when they retire, and we want them to see intergenerational volunteering as a potential way to meet people of different backgrounds and utilise their skills.

### **Does our bid have to show how we will help deliver all the national policies in the 'Policy Context' section?**

No, although we are likely to look favourably on bids that have strong links back to the four public service agreements. We expect there to be differences in emphasis amongst the bids that we select. In other words some are likely to provide a greater focus on addressing one or two particular policy areas than others. We do not expect every bid to address all policy areas equally. We do however expect every bid to produce benefits for both younger **and** older people

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## **Will the National Evaluation not put a lot of burden on us to collect data or will they do it all for us?**

There is a very clear expectation that successful bidders will need to demonstrate how they will arrange for the effective collection of data for the national evaluation. This is a demonstrator programme and evaluation is therefore crucial. It is expected that bidders will either use some of their existing capacity, or use some of the grant funding to enable them to do this. The application form provides opportunities for bidders to indicate their approach.

## **What is the relevance of the Inspiring Communities programme and how does the link with it work?**

Inspiring Communities is a programme managed by Communities and Local Government and includes an element of intergenerational volunteering. The links between the two programmes are explained in the bidding documentation.

## **How long will we have from announcement as a successful bidder to getting things up and running 'on the ground'?**

We will announce the successful areas in early – mid July. We expect local partners to use the summer to plan and implement their proposals, and would expect to see at least the parts of successful proposals up and running by early Autumn. Each successful site will be required to prepare an implementation plan setting out their detailed delivery proposals.

## **Do we have to bid for the full amount?**

No. We are inviting bids "up to" £400,000. We will consider proposals that clearly deliver on our desired outcomes, but on a smaller scale. This might be especially true for smaller local authority areas. However, the aim of this programme is to encourage strategic investment in intergenerational activity, and so bids for the full amounts of possible funding are generally expected.

## **What will happen if we can't spend all the money that we receive within the timescale of the programme?**

Local areas will be able to profile the expenditure to best meet their needs and expected profile of activity. This will be expected to be outlined clearly in their implementation plans. However, any money unspent by 31 March 2011 will be recouped by the grant administrators and returned to the funding departments.

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## **How does this relate to the volunteering fund announced by the Office of the Third Sector in December?**

The Office of the Third Sector fund is now part of *Generations Together* and joins funding from Department for Children School and Families, Department of Health and Department for Work and Pensions. This has resulted in the creation of a larger cross Government programme which will provide more resources to support intergenerational activity. The bidding document makes it clear that at least 50% of the grant resources must be deployed within the third sector.

## **Bidding document**

### **How specific do we need to be in Table's 1 and 2? It is difficult to be precise within the timescales you have set.**

Our principle requirement is to have an indication that you have begun to think through some of your delivery challenges. What is required is a 'high level' view rather than a detailed implementation plan.

### **One of the key criteria is innovation. Will you only accept bids for things that have never been done anywhere else in the country?**

No. Given the relatively undeveloped nature of intergenerational activity we are happy to look at proposals which are innovative within your area, even if there is some evidence of them having existed elsewhere. Local innovation is quite acceptable. That having been said, we are also keen to receive completely new ideas about bringing younger and older generations together for mutually beneficial outcomes.

### **How will you judge whether there is a truly partnership approach with the third sector? Is there not the risk that the local authority will dominate?**

We will be particularly looking for evidence that third sector organisations have been involved in the development of the bid. We will also be looking for evidence of third sector involvement in the delivery and governance of the programme as equal partners if the bid is successful. In addition particular attention will be paid to the involvement of smaller local third sector organisations.

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## What do you mean by 'developing a strategic approach'?

The intergenerational activity which currently exists is most commonly small scale, sporadic and sits outside any coherent policy framework. In many parts of the country there is little evidence of any formally supported intergenerational work. By a 'strategic approach' we expect to see proposals which:

- are based on some assessment of need (Joint Strategic Needs Assessments may help here);
- are located within a wider policy framework (e.g. the Local Area Agreement of Sustainable Communities Strategy);
- are clear about the outcomes which the initiatives are expected to deliver;
- have a view about how this area of work will be developed over the medium to longer term; and
- have a view about their links to other services / initiatives, including those delivered by the voluntary sector.

We recognise that this will be a challenge for most bidders. The important thing is to be able to show how you have begun to think through these issues and how you plan to use the demonstrator programme to get you to a point where the above elements will become more robust.

## Do we need to follow a particular approach to project management?

The important thing here is that you are able to demonstrate that you have a methodical approach to delivery, rather than whether you propose to use PRINCE 2 etc. One of the key criteria used to select successful bids will be the robustness of their thinking about delivery of the project within the timescales of the programme.

## Will the data requirements be onerous?

The detail of the data requirements will be discussed with the successful sites. They will be proportionate and appropriate to the objectives of the programme. Given the resources being made available it is not expected that the requirements will be beyond any site which has a strong approach to project delivery and management.

## If we aren't able to identify resources from within the Council and its partners will we be unable to bid for this programme?

There is an expectation that local authorities and their partners will deploy some of their own resources to enhance the total capacity of the programme. However, this can include contributions 'in kind', including the sort of 'infrastructure' common within local authorities that might be deployed on project or performance management. It is unlikely that bids which are unable to demonstrate some sort of organisational commitment of this nature would be successful.

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## Who should Third Sector organisations contact if they are interested in being involved in applying to the fund?

The bids require the involvement of the Director of Children's Services and Director of Adult Services. In the first instance third sector organisations should contact their local authority children or adult services departments to express an interest in being involved in any bid the local authority might be considering putting into the programme.

## How should Local Authorities consult with third sector organisations?

Councils should use their normal mechanisms for communicating with the third sector.

In addition to this there are a range of organisations that provide guidance to Local Authorities on consulting with third sector organisations. In November 2008 the Cabinet Office published research by the organisation Involve, which includes a practical handbook, called "Better Together", to help public servants open up the consultation process to reach third sector workers. It is available via the Involve website [www.involve.org.uk/publications](http://www.involve.org.uk/publications).

The Compact also provides best practice guidance on consulting with the third sector organisations, including codes of practice. These are available on the Compact website [www.thecompact.org.uk/information/100023/publications/](http://www.thecompact.org.uk/information/100023/publications/).

## What is included in the volunteer number target?

*Generations Together* has an overall target of involving 20,000 volunteers in intergenerational activity by the end of the programme.

The Government defines a volunteer as someone who gives unpaid help to someone who is not a relative. This would include both older and younger people. We would expect the majority of volunteers involved in the programme to be individuals that are new to volunteering.

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