



ISLE OF WIGHT
**Community &
Family Learning
Commissioning
Prospectus**

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Isle of Wight Council

Community and Family Learning Service Commissioning Prospectus 2009

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Grant- making Prospectuses are part of the Isle of Wight Strategic Partnership's strategy for ensuring an environment for a thriving third sector. For more information about the strategy and related programmes, contact: Martin Johnson (email: martin.johnson@iow.gov.uk), tel 01983 823825

Community and Family Learning Service Commissioning Prospectus 2009

1. Introduction

The third sector on the Isle of Wight makes a significant contribution to Island life. Over 12000 voluntary, community, faith and resident groups, together with social enterprises, enrich our cultural, social, and sporting life. They also promote our knowledge, wellbeing, safety and prosperity. The third sector also has an increasing role to play in delivering public services.

The Isle of Wight Council and its partners in the Island Strategic Partnership want to encourage a thriving third sector as well as ensuring the best use of public funding. These two commitments come together in the Partnership's Strategy for Ensuring the Environment for a Thriving Third Sector on the Island (2009). A copy of the full strategy can be found at www.eco-island.org.uk/documents/vco_strategy_final_april_09.pdf

This strategy establishes a new grant funding process. We call this our Prospectus approach. We believe this strategy will lead to:

- A thriving and sustainable voluntary and community sector.
- Better planning and delivery of public services through a partnership between the public sector, the third sector and local communities.
- Encouragement for social enterprise.
- Public services that harness the knowledge, experience, potential and creativity of voluntary organisations and local communities.
- A campaigning and independent third sector that speaks for excluded, unheard or disengaged communities.
- Investment in the third sector and its infrastructure.

1.1 What is this Prospectus for?

Prospectuses are part of our grant-making framework, they clarify what public sector organisations want to achieve in various areas of Island life. These objectives are set out as priorities and outcomes. Prospectuses invite third sector organisations to bid for funding in return for delivering these outcomes.

Prospectuses will give equal opportunity to new and existing third sector organisations that want to bid for grant funding. The Prospectus makes it clear how grant funding will deliver public sector spending plans and priorities and it triggers a more open and transparent grant-making process.

The Prospectus approach recognises the unique nature of the many hundreds of possible applicant organisations. It is a competitive process that is intended to encourage innovation in public service, collaboration and capacity building in the voluntary sector. It also implements Local Compact commitments to long term funding; full cost recovery and payment in advance where needed.

1.2 Delivering Public Sector Plans and Priorities

The Island Strategic Partnership's Eco Island Sustainable Community Strategy (2008) sets out a vision for the Island:

“We want the Isle of Wight to become a world renowned Eco Island, with a thriving economy, a real sense of pride and where residents and visitors enjoy healthy lives, feel safe and are treated with respect”.

The main themes and priorities for Island partners are:

- Creating a thriving Island
- A healthy and supportive Island
- A safe and well-kept Island
- An inspiring Island

The Eco Island strategy can be found at www.eco-island.org.uk

As lead partner in the local partnership and the main local grant funder, the Isle of Wight Council's priorities for 2009-2011 support this vision:

- Housing;
- Organisational development and improvement;
- Transformation of social care;
- The public realm;
- Schools;
- Roads.

A full copy of the Council's corporate plan can be found at www.iwight.com/council/documents/docFiles/CorporatePlan2008_2011.pdf

1.3 Why do we want a partnership with the Third Sector?

The public sector on the Isle of Wight believes that involving third sector groups and organisations in planning and delivering local services and activities promotes stronger and more active communities as well as achieving better value for money.

A combination of partnership and investment in the third sector will develop and sustain its capacity and contribution to Island life.

Partnerships with the third sector are not always the cheapest option. However, third sector involvement in local public services can offer a different and distinctive value in comparison to public or private provision. A thriving and independent third sector is also an agent for change. It can also help us to arrange and fund (commission) more responsive services based on service user or community-based knowledge and experience.

2. Community and Family Learning (CFL) Services

2.1 Objectives and priorities

The objective of this commission is to involve more adults from disadvantaged communities and priority groups in learning through the use of innovative projects and opportunities.

Our priorities are to:

- Support economic development and regeneration, enabling all to be able to share in the Island's economic success, through increasing the skills of the whole community.
- Increase adult participation in cultural activities, sport and active recreation to improve health and emotional wellbeing .
- Ensure that people of all ages have places to live and things to do in their local area.
- Increase the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality.
- Support families and carers to provide a safe and positive environment for our young people including tackling child poverty.

For more information about the work undertaken by the Service you can read the Adult Learning Plan at: www.iwcommunitylearning.ac.uk

2.2 Outcomes sought through this prospectus

This prospectus offers grant aid to groups and organisations that will:

1. Provide courses or learning opportunities of between 3-15 hours in length that are available to people in a wide variety of places.
2. Learning opportunities will have been:
Shaped by community groups and learners.
Accessible to people normally excluded from learning by transport and childcare problems.

In addition, all activities must:

- have been provided in a way that meets Ofsted guidelines and requirements; the CFL service will support you on this.
- ensure that learner will have an enrolment form and an Individual Learning Plan that can be shared every month with the CFL Service.
- have a Statement of Learner Entitlement. This can be found with the Prospectus at www.eco-island.org.uk/prospectus

2.3 How will we know that our outcomes are being achieved?

- We will ask you by prior agreement, to have regular monitoring meetings with a CFL Service Manager to discuss how well you are doing, particularly how well you are meeting any targets that you may have agreed.
- A CFL Manager will sit-in and observe your activities every six weeks or so by prior arrangement with you.
- The CFL service will use the enrolment forms that you collect to monitor information on age, gender and diversity, so that the Learning & Skills Council can be provided with the information they need.
- A learner satisfaction survey will take place once every term.
- The CFL service will offer you whatever resources and support they can, should you need it.

2.4 Funding and resources that the commissioner can make available

- Services should start at or before the 1st of February 2010. The total expected funding available during the period in which the grant will be paid is £10,000. You can bid for all or part of this fund. Use the application form to tell us how much funding you require. Other funding may also be available at the time of the appraisal of bids.
- An initial start up payment of 10% can be claimed on agreement. Please see section 5 of this Prospectus for other payment details.
- We can offer successful bidders some training and will help with the marketing of their learning opportunities.
- You will have access to the CFL Service's equipment resource bank which you can use to support learners with disabilities.
- For carnival related and celebratory arts courses it may be possible for you to use the Carnival Learning Centre by prior agreement.

This is a new grant. Existing grants, contracts and services are not affected.

2.5 How to apply

This is a competitive process and the funding decisions will be based on the information you supply. To apply, complete a small grants application form, which can be found online on www.eco-island.org.uk/prospectus or call the Carnival Learning Centre at Westridge (tel 01983 817280).

Please contact the CFL Service (see below) to discuss your ideas before you begin an application. This will help you to submit the best possible bid. Be sure to use the application form to tell us how your bid will deliver our outcomes and priorities, how you will use the grant funding and how you will be able to show us how well your service is working.

Providing community and family learning creates a number of responsibilities. This means that successful bidders must be able to show that they are or will be able to meet these responsibilities. You should discuss these issues with the CFL service before making an application. The particular responsibilities that you must cover in your application are:

- Public liability insurance.
- Your arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children; check what standards are required before submitting a bid.
- If you've not previously provided services to Community and Family Learning, you should attach a suitable reference in support of your bid.

Completed applications should be sent to Sarah Teague, Community & Family Learning Manager, The CFL Service, The Carnival Learning Centre Westridge, Brading Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight, PO33 1QS. Applications received after the closing date cannot be considered.

2.6 Key dates

This Prospectus will be issued on or about:	1st October 2009.
The closing date for applications is:	30th November 2009.
The Appraisal Panel will meet on or about:	15th of December 2009
Learning opportunities to begin by:	1st February 2010.

2.7 Contacts

- To speak to the commissioner about what the CFL service wants to achieve and how they might work with you, call Charles Charalambous (charles.charalambous@iow.gov.uk) or Sarah Teague (sarah.teague@iow.gov.uk) at 01983 817280
- To discuss the process that is being used to award this grant, please call Martin Johnson (martin.johnson@iow.gov.uk), The IW Council's Partnerships Manager, at County Hall on 01983 823825.
- For information on how to get independent advice on your application, contact the IW Rural Community Council on 01983 524058.

2.8 Guidance for the appraisal panel

The most up to date reference and guidance on how we will allocate grant funding is available at www.eco-island.org.uk/prospectus

3. Making a Grant Application

3.1 Preparing an Application

What is this prospectus for?

Section 2 of this prospectus sets out what we want to achieve and invites third sector organisations to bid for grants. If you apply, you must explain to us how a grant will help us to achieve our objectives.

How do we apply?

There are two application forms, a version for Small Grants and a Standard Grant application form. Section 2 of the Prospectus will tell you which form to use and the deadlines for applying. If this is not clear, please use the contact arrangements in the 'How to Apply' part of Section 2 to clarify which form to use before you start.

The application forms provide us with information about your organisation and what you would do with a grant.

Large and complex grants with legal obligations or responsibilities will need the longer and more complex Standard Grant Application form. This may take time to complete and you will need to gather together some extra information.

You can find a Grant Application form at:

www.eco-island.org.uk/prospectus or call 01983 823825

What do I have to send with the application form?

We may need evidence of your experience or ability to use grant funding. This may include evidence of insurance or your policies. We take a proportionate view of what is needed and will only ask for evidence that is essential. If you want to supply evidence that has not been asked for, check with the contact person in Section 2 to see whether this will be helpful.

What must I put into our application?

The Prospectus invites you to bid for funding that will deliver our outcomes and priorities. It does not tell you how to deliver your service or activity; this is for you to tell us.

Tell us which outcomes in Section 2 you are going to help us achieve, why you are applying to help and how you will do it. What will your service or activity be like? Tell us about the practicalities of your proposal; be clear about how you will ensure that everyone will be treated equally and fairly.

Set out some standards that people can expect from you. Suggest some periodic measures that you can use to show us how well you've been doing.

The Council and its partners in the Island Strategic Partnership are committed to making the Eco Island strategy a success. If you can, please try to find somewhere in your application to tell us how your service or activity will make people safer or healthier. You can also tell us how it will contribute to the

Island economy and how you might minimise your use of energy and carbon production.

Will you pay us enough to deliver our service or activity?

We will try to pay you all of the costs of delivering what you propose to do for us. We will also consider payment in advance.

In order for us to decide if your proposal represents value, and how much grant you need, make sure that your proposal is properly costed with both direct and indirect costs. Pay particular attention to the finance section of the application form.

Will we be asked to report on what we do?

We'll try not to burden you with more reporting than is necessary. However, some of the outcomes in the Prospectus will be linked to government and other measures often beyond our control. If there are specific targets that need to be reported, this will be made clear in Section 2 of the Prospectus. If this causes you concern, contact us to discuss this before you apply.

Will there be policies and procedures that we must have?

The application process has been designed to allow groups of any size or status, new or long-standing, to apply for funding. Depending on what the grant is for, we may need some re-assurance that your service or activity will be safe, inclusive and well managed. Some policies, financial information or insurances may be asked for in Section 2 above.

Applications using the longer Standard Application Form will be asked to provide detailed evidence. Expect to supply this with the bid.

If you are not clear about what is needed, use the contact arrangements in Section 2 to clarify what is needed before you bid.

3.2 Getting Help to Bid

To help you prepare the best possible bid, particularly where you may not have made a bid like this before, the Isle of Wight Rural Community Council will welcome requests for independent advice and support. To clarify what help is available; see the Contacts' part of Section 2 above.

4. Decision Making

4.1 The Appraisal Process

The appraisal process will identify the applications that best help us reach our outcomes. The appraisal process will check the suitability of the various bidders to receive public funds and the degree to which the bid will achieve the outcomes they offer to work toward.

The decision to award a grant is the responsibility of the commissioner or funder, who will be helped to make decisions by a panel of people that will include an independent representative of the third sector, and wherever possible, service users and members of local communities.

Whether you are a new organisation or are already receiving funding, submitting an application does not guarantee that funding will be awarded to you. It will often be the case that bids will exceed the available funding.

The First stage – Eligibility and a technical appraisal

Your application will have an initial assessment of your group or organisation's ability to receive grant funding, based on the information you supply.

If you are felt to be ineligible to receive grant aid, we will contact you to discuss our decision. If after this you are still ineligible, the bid will be declined.

We will also check that applications have been completed properly and any supporting papers are attached. Your application may be declined if it fails this test. However, in exceptional circumstances, if the Commissioner believes that the bid can be improved, and there is time available, we may contact you for further information. If this is not supplied, the bid will be declined.

Second stage – Scoring Panel

Eligible bids will be assessed and scored by the appraisers. They will consider how well each application meets the outcomes and priorities set out in the prospectus; please take these fully into account when preparing your bid.

In most cases the appraisal panel will only make decisions based on the written application that you have provided, so it is essential that the application meets the requirements set out in the Prospectus. However, the panel may want to meet you or ask for extra information as part of their appraisal. An invitation from the panel to discuss an application should not be construed as an indication that you have been successful.

4.2 Notification of Decisions

You will be informed of the decision in respect of your bid and will have the opportunity to receive feedback on your submission. The Council will publish details of successful applications and will identify where services have not been commissioned because of a lack of suitable applications.

5. Managing Grants

5.1 Our Funding Agreement

Successful bidders will be offered a Grant Aid Funding Agreement with Conditions, which will set out the responsibilities of the funder and the successful bidder.

Negotiations on the terms and conditions of any Grant Funding Agreement will be finished and signed off by the funder in time for successful bidders to begin service delivery by the date set out in 'Key Dates' (Section 2.6 above).

All grant funding awarded as a result of this Prospectus is subject to the Isle of Wight Council's Standing Orders, Finance and Audit Requirements, and those of any other funding partners.

5.2 Payment Arrangements

Unless agreed otherwise through negotiation, successful bidders will receive payment in 4 equal quarterly payments. The Council will make all payments relating to a quarter within its first month on the submission of any pre-agreed information set out in the Grant Funding Agreement. Arrangements can be made to make payment in advance by agreement.

Payments will normally be made directly into the selected service providers' accounts via BACS.

All funding relates specifically to the period covered by the Grant Funding Agreement and should not be accrued without the prior agreement of the funder. Possible surpluses can therefore be a subject for negotiation in the Grant Funding Agreement.

5.3 Monitoring and Reviewing Progress

Successful bidders will be asked to provide us with performance reports that should be agreed and set out in the Grant Funding Agreement. Any subsequent changes to reporting should only take place with the consent of all of the parties to the Grant Funding Agreement.

During the period of the Grant Funding Agreement we may ask you to co-operate with a financial audit or review. This will enable us to check that adequate audit trails and internal controls are in place, as well as possibly helping successful bidders to improve their business systems. It will also provide us with reassurance of the robustness and reliability of financial administration and risk management.