

PIP.... Frequently Asked Questions and Advice for Bidders

How much money is available in total?

Based on the number of applications received we are making £18,000 available. That means you have a good chance of being funded (if you turn up.) Some applicants will be disappointed. This is a competitive process.

How many people are bidding?

We expect nine projects to be presenting their idea. All are asking for between £1,800 and £3,000. If bidders don't show on the day we may reduce the £18,000 pot to ensure it remains competitive.

Why no smaller £500 applicants?

We received very small numbers of smaller bid, so we decided it wasn't needed. (though we are already making a range of our smaller awards in different ways). At least one of these smaller projects may present their idea on the day, but they won't be being scored.

How long do we have to present our project?

Each applicant will be allowed up to 4 minutes to present their project, and we expect you to present for at least 3 minutes. (3 minutes can feel like a surprisingly long time, so make sure you prepare well). This extra minute is optional, and can instead be used to answer a few questions from the audience. After 4 minutes our 'expert panel' will have one more minute to ask you their questions. So five minutes in total.

What will our presentation be like? What do we need to do?

Up to three people can make each presentation. Or just one. If more want to come to support you they can stand with you but not speak or answer questions. Let us know if more than three are coming please.

You won't be able to use PowerPoint or other digital or film projections or pre-recorded music, unless there is a clear reason for this, such as a disability or equal opportunity issue. You can however make live music, recite a poem, create a mini drama, use models or maps or display a poster you have designed. Making your presentation fun and informative is very important.

You can, if you wish, submit ONE picture, logo or powerpoint slide that can be used as a backdrop to your presentation. It must be in a standard 6x4 format, and if a JPG should be at least 200kb in size. We will need it by end of Tuesday 2nd February. Please send it to Angela Diggie by email.

Can we see examples of what makes a good presentation?

You can watch a short online YouTube film that may explain the format we are using.

<http://pbnetwork.org.uk/pb-in-blaenau-gwent-with-home-office-funds/>

We also encourage you to contact us if you have any questions.

Is it fair to have to make a presentation like this? Why not just rely on our written application like most grant funding? Won't people just vote for their friends?

The PIP presentation format isn't new. Over 200 similar events in the last few years have used the same presentation and audience vote format, to hand out over £20m of funding. We will be taking learning from those experiences to try to make the process as fair as possible. We have gone for this process to get the best of both worlds – a review with supporting feedback of your short written application and then your 3 minute presentation.

Experience elsewhere is that this process can bring better decisions and a more accessible and fair process, and directs money where its most needed. Once all the ideas are made public it's much easier to judge which has the potential to make the most difference and for all to see that the decision was fair, open and transparent.

That is another reason why PIP is using this format where you present in front of the people who also want the money. It forces you to think about your ideas more deeply. You hear about their projects and they hear about yours. And maybe you can collaborate once you know about them. It's about building a network of social enterprises and social entrepreneurs to tap in to.

The process is being overseen by people with lots of experience in doing things this way and the scoring will be secure and anonymous. Any person voting must vote for more than one project, or none of their votes will count.

If you have concerns before or after the event, please tell us, and if necessary, we will formally respond to a written complaint.

How will we know whether we have been successful?

On the day we add up the scores and expect to be able to announce who will receive PIP funding.

How long will it all take?

You (and everyone voting) will be expected to stay for the whole session to be able to vote or receive PIP funding. That is so you hear all the projects and make an informed choice.

Nine presentations of 5 minutes should take up to one hour with handover time. We then expect it will take up to one hour to collect, count the scores and announce them.

So expect to be there around 2 and a half hours please.

We are not providing refreshments beyond some tea and coffee and some nibbles. You may get hungry! Eat first or afterwards. But there is a cafe on site.

How will the voting work?

Everyone voting will be given a sheet listing all the projects, how much they are asking for and a brief set of wording about the project from the application forms. They will also get a voting sheet and be asked to score each project out of 5 points (5 being excellent, 1 being poor). They must score each project for their voting sheet to count.

We also have an independent panel of 3 expert and respected people with knowledge of social enterprise. They will receive copies of the full application and a similar voting sheet. They will also individually score each project out of 5.

We will then collect the score sheets and count them. Using a simple formula we will ensure 60% of the final score for each project will come from the audience scores, and 40% from the expert panel scores. That way we will ensure everyone's vote matters, and that every project gets due consideration. This formula voting has been tried before and seen to work well, and can reduce biases from unkind bidders voting themselves up and others down.

One final rule. If any project scores less than 2 out of 5 (40%) on average across all the scores they can't be funded. That is to make sure that there is a minimum standard. It's highly unlikely anyone will face this situation, but we have a duty to make sure any funding we manage goes to a project that will make good use of the money.

So who can vote and who can't?

It's an open crowd-funding model. Everyone's views matter. All registered participants over the age of 14 who hear all the presentations will be able to vote. Bidders will be able to score other bids, and also their own. We encourage everyone to respect the values of being a social enterprise and act ethically and in the interest of all. It's why we do it this way folks! We have designed a process we believe to be open, transparent and fair.

Once all the scores have been calculated we count down from the top, making full awards in descending order until the money runs out. This means one organisation will probably be offered only partial funding. Projects scoring below them won't get funded.

What happens if we aren't successful?

Everyone who isn't successful will be offered support to see where else they might be able to access grants, generate income, or find social investment. You will also be offered a place on our Thrive training (as will all the successful applicants.) Thrive will be on Wednesday the 24th February 2016 (see below for more information on Thrive and ongoing support we offer).

It's also possible if any group can't take up their award that after the event it will be offered to the next most successful project.

What are the administrative arrangements?

If you have been successful you will be asked to complete some short checks required by Unltd, who are our funder. (see <https://unltd.org.uk/lead-the-change-programme/>)

- We will copy your written application onto their form (which asks similar questions). You will be able to update your answers if you wish, or we may ask for a bit of clarification. We'll make it as simple as possible for you.
- Sign the agreement on how the funds will be used, which will include a named contact from you (and with us) and agree to report how the money has been spent.
- Nominate 2 independent references, and give us your bank details so we can pay you.
- Keep in contact with us through your named contact for at least 6 months after receiving funding and inform them about how the money was used.
- Keep receipts and records of expenditure and activity in case we need to see them.
- Complete a simple self assessment/evaluation plan to help you record and hopefully improve on the outcomes of receiving your PIP funding.
- We may ask you attend a future event to let others in the local social enterprise community know how you got on. This is optional.

If we win on the day will we definitely get the funding?

Basically yes, we can see no reason why you wouldn't. However we do have to check after the event that all the scoring was done correctly (though rare mistakes can happen) and we need to fulfil Unltd's requirements. So announcements on the day are provisional on that process being completed successfully. But we have checked your application, in many cases already met you and we can't see it should be any problem if announced on the day you are successful.

When must the money be spent by? What if things don't work out as we planned?

We aim to be as flexible as possible but would expect you to have signed your agreement within one month of decision day, with the bulk of expenditure and activity within six months of then.

We cannot increase the amount of funding if you find that you don't have enough. If asked we will always try to help you find other funding, so please keep in contact.

If for some reason your project can't go ahead (or perhaps you didn't need all the money) we may ask you repay outstanding amounts so we can re-allocate funding towards other projects in need of support.

Thrive on the 24th February and other support we provide

We are holding our Thrive training at the Cornerstone in Lancaster (unless numbers mean we need a bigger venue). It's optional, but everyone who has done it tells us it's very helpful in developing a new social enterprise. It's delivered by Jez Hall of Shared Future CIC.

On Thrive you will also be helped to complete the evaluation template mentioned above, which can be really useful in making your project a success, and demonstrating it to be one.

Besides that you will have your named contact, who you can ask for help at any time, and also access Social Enterprise surgery sessions run by Mandy Naylor.. Her sessions are very popular so we can't guarantee when you can be seen. But we always aim to help when we can.

We hope that is enough information for now.

Any questions?

Please contact Angela Diggle: angela.diggle@sharedfuturecic.org.uk

Be there! If you don't show up you can't be funded (or vote.)

Don't forget to register yourself, co-presenters, and spread the word to your network:

<https://lancasterpip.eventbrite.co.uk>

Want more information?

Our general PIP information page is at:

<http://www.sharedfuturecic.org.uk/information-on-the-north-lancashire-pip-awards-programme/>

Our website is, with our contact information and who we are is at

<http://www.sharedfuturecic.org.uk>