

Northamptonshire Children & Young People's Collaboration

Call for Expressions of Interest: Partnership Host

Introduction

Northamptonshire Children & Young People's Collaboration are seeking a host organisation to support the development of a Local Youth Partnership in the area, supported by West Northamptonshire Council and Young People's Foundation Trust (YPF Trust).

Over the next 18 months, partners will build on collaboration work to date by establishing an independent charity to further strengthen collaboration, convening and capacity building, with the aim of working together for the benefit of children and young people.

This document sets out what we are looking for, and how you can express your interest in being the host organisation.

What does the sector look like in Northamptonshire?

Passion, drive and commitment to our children and young people is at an all-time high. We see children, youth & community practitioners delivering consistently in their communities to make a difference and create change in partnership with young people.

However, statutory services for younger children and their families are often short term interventions, with children and families being concerned about the lack of relationship with statutory workers, and agencies. The VCSE sector would like to work in a co-ordinated way, and moves are being made in this direction.

Why collaborate?

The Community of Practice for Youth & Community Work hosted by University of Northampton started discussions with providers in 2022 to understand the local sector. It was clear that providers were busy delivering projects and support for young people and their communities however, their managers and leaders were also busy securing funds and meeting the costs for the delivery. Not only does this mean the services are treading water but planning, development and growth for our youngest generation is in survival mode rather than inspiring, motivating and growing our communities. Leaders and managers are finding it difficult to get to network meetings, communicate the experiences of young people and advocate for change. We now need a collaborative

structure where co-production and empowerment can be enabled and where commissioners can promote strategic development of communities.

The Children & Young People's Thematic Partnership

In 2019 Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire received funding for the development of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector Assembly, with a number of sub-groups based upon themes – hence the Children and Young People's Thematic Partnership (CYPTP). Membership of the CYPTP is open to VCSE CYP organisations, there are approximately 70 members representing a wide range of bodies, across both West and North Northamptonshire.

Coming out of the CYPTP has been the desire to work closely together, and having seen the benefits of the Mental Health Northants Collaboration for its beneficiaries and members, and Integrated Care Northamptonshire, with CYPTP members active in the different areas of the Integrated Care System.

The Youth Offer Board

The Youth Offer Board of West Northants Council has been instrumental in supporting the VCSE sector to form a collaboration, with the clear understanding that the collaboration needs to be led by the VCSE with the voices of children and young people being involved in the direction.

Youth Provider Network

The Youth Provider Network set up by Northampton Borough Council during Covid gave inspiration to the notion of collaboration. The reality and power of 'one workforce' was visible and achievable. With serious violence incidents, the VCSE have mobilised as one workforce led by West Northants Community Safety and Engagement to deliver what communities and young people need. We have a strong, trusting partnership which can now move to the next step of a formal collaboration.

So how?

With the guidance of YPF Trust and support of the Youth Offer Board, we have been able to draw on national examples and areas with similar circumstances as Northamptonshire.

Providers have told us they want an independent charitable organisation to take the pressure off for leaders and managers; to obtain resources for their delivery so that we can collectively move to developing our communities as we set out to when we chose these careers.

We are now seeking an organisation help take things forward.

Key features of the Host Organisation

The Host organisation is an interim arrangement which allows the collaboration to develop and grow in a stable environment. Through discussions with areas currently undertaking or exploring this model, the following key features for any organisation taking on this role have emerged.

- Governance – the organisation should have robust governance in place, and a history of being a secure and established organisation (e.g. via charity commission reporting)
- Sustainability – the organisation should have strong foundations in place to ensure sustainability for the partnership, including financial records which demonstrate the organisation is a going concern.
- Collaboration – the organisation should have a history of providing sector support, capacity building or related activities which will be vital to the success of the partnership. Organisations like LIOs often have these, or broader community development organisations.
- Independence – the organisation should be able to demonstrate how it will be a neutral and independent presence, and ensure clear governance and programme management arrangements which allow for the partnership to thrive (e.g. outline how decisions are made, how the steering group of the partnership connects to the governance of the Host organisation)
- Reputation – the organisation should be well known and trusted by local partners, especially grass roots organisations who will benefit most from the partnership and are at the greatest risk of being excluded.
- Locality – the organisation should be local (i.e. be based in the area) and have a strong understanding of local needs (of children and young people and of the sector) and be well established within the local area (i.e. not coming into the area just to do this piece of work).

Key functions of the Host Organisation, Staff, and the Steering Group.

Specific responsibilities of the Host Organisation will include:

- Employing a Development Worker for a period of 18 months from the contract start date. Covering HR and financial responsibilities of being an employer.
- To hold funds, to pay staff and agencies as appropriate and provide financial reporting.
- Providing wider governance support to the steering group

Activities undertaken by the Development Worker include:

- Coordinating and administering collaboration activities e.g. network events, updates, information sharing
- Supporting the collaboration to become established e.g. creating a CIO, recruiting trustees.
- Ensuring the meaningful engagement of young people in the formation of the collaborative.
- Ensuring the meaningful engagement of VCSE children and young people's organisations in the development of a Collaboration.
- Support wider children and young people's participation work across the area.
- Coordinating specific projects and activities in support of the collaborative e.g. co-designing commissioning, area wide initiatives.
- Being a focal/central communication point for a range of key stakeholders, including public sector, funders, national partners.
- Supporting the collaboration to secure further funding, including core funding for the collaboration and activities costs for partners/members.
- Supporting wider engagement of the collaboration across the area e.g. representation of boards

Work undertaken during this period will be overseen by a Steering Group, who have overall responsibility for the development of the partnership.

The Steering Group's activities will include

- Oversee the work of the host organisation in achieving the desired outcomes of this seed funding in setting up the collaboration.
- Ensuring that collaboration work is equitable, inclusive and representative of the area.
- Make decisions concerning the distribution of funding to Collaboration members as appropriate.
- Facilitate the transfer of assets and staff to the Collaboration in a timely and well managed way.
- Ensure that the governance of the Collaboration is appropriate, robust and adhered to.

The Host Organisation is accountable to the Steering Group, as well as to any funders and other stakeholders.

How to express an interest

If you are interested in taking on the Host Organisation role, then we are inviting you to complete the short form under Appendix 1 and submit it to Claire Neilson (claire.neilson@voluntaryimpact.org.uk) by 5pm on Friday 8th September 2023.

Expressions of interest will be reviewed by a panel of VCSE partners, supported by YPF Trust.

They will make a recommendation to West Northamptonshire Council, who will make a final decision on appointing the Host Organisation.

The Host Organisation will then enter into a funding agreement with West Northamptonshire Council.

It is envisaged that a final decision will be made in September 2023, with work beginning in October 2023 and lasting a period of 18 months.

Assessment Criteria

In assessing expressions of interest, the following criteria will be taken into account:

Criteria	Weighting
Evidence of good governance, structure and organisational sustainability	10%
History of collaboration, convening and capacity building	20%
Evidence of independence and neutrality	20%
A strong local reputation and experience of working with and for local grass roots organisations	20%
Capacity to deliver the project and dedicate sufficient resources and expertise	20%
Additional support or resources that you can contribute to the success of the project	10%
TOTAL	100%

Please ensure that you directly address these areas in your expression of interest.

Appendix 1: Expression of Interest (EOI)

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Name of organisation:

Name of person completing this form:

Role:

Address:

Phone number:

email:

**Please tell us about your organisation (what you do, why and how),
and why you are well placed to be the Host Organisation**

Max 750 words

Partners have identified a number of key criteria for any organisation taking in the role of Host Organisation:

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Please outline how you meet these criteria:

Max 750 words

Please outline who would do this work in practice

(who will deliver the project, why, and how will they be supported)

Max 500 words

Please outline any further value you can bring to the project

Max 250 words

Please outline any other considerations that West Northamptonshire Council or the Steering group would need to make

(eg. support needs, accessibility):

Max 250 words