



University of Brighton

Community
University
Partnership
Programme

sussex
learningnetwork



SLN:COP

Innovations Fund

Guidance Notes 2017/18

The deadline for applications Monday 18th December, 2017

Guidance Notes (4 pages)

1. Introduction

SLN:COP Innovations Funding is a new approach to developing partnerships between university academics, community organisations and a wider network of further education (FE) stakeholders that can create new approaches in widening participation in our target wards across Sussex. This fund is part of a wider programme that aims to increase participation in higher education (HE) in wards where rates are low overall.

We are seeking applications for partnerships that bring together community knowledge and action with academic perspectives in ways that can support young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to explore and address:

- their aspirations for the future
- their views of post 18 study programmes and
- the challenges and barriers associated with engaging with these.

We are looking for projects that can develop activities in two main strands:

- I) *New Evidence*: We want to gather new insights, evidence and information on the areas outlined above. This includes projects that seek to combine existing knowledge in these partnerships that will offer new understandings or ideas.
- II) *New Approaches*: We want to fund pilot activities and interventions that put new ideas about supporting young people with their aspirations and barriers into practice. This includes specifically exploring the feasibility of a particular idea.

You can apply to either of these strands, or across both if the work you are planning has sufficient potential. Funding of up to £8000 is available. Projects will be funded for between 6-9 months and expected to start by February 2018. We anticipate funding at least one partnership project in West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex.

Who is the fund for?

This fund is designed to kick start co-working between groups of people that have a research and action interest in increasing young people's participation in HE. To be eligible to bid, each application needs to be co-led by a community partner (who should be from a not-for profit or voluntary group) and an academic partner who should be based within the University or Brighton, Sussex or Chichester.

Other groups and organisations are encouraged to participate in the delivery of these partnerships, but are not eligible to lead, and these include:

- Local authority partners
- Schools
- FE colleges and providers

If you have a good idea but are seeking a partner, we can offer you some support. Please contact us as early as possible.

2. What will a seed funded project involve?

We expect seed fund applicants to focus their project on a series of activities that build partnership and contribute to the co-production of outputs. This can include:

- piloting activities
- meetings
- literature reviews
- making new connections or establishing networks
- holding events
- developing new processes or support structures (e.g. mentoring, taster courses etc....)
- Producing reports, materials, resources, creative outputs or media that can be disseminated more widely

Budget

As with the content of the application, we expect you to allocate resources in the partnership to reflect time spent on the project from all partners and colleagues. The budget should also be of an appropriate scale for the project and can be used for:

- People's time
- Venue hire/meeting space
- Travel and subsistence
- Printing of materials/publicity
- Training costs
- Event costs

You have the option to show some of your costs required as 'in kind', i.e. contributions to a project in time, goods or services which the fund would otherwise have to pay for.

Please note that £8,000 is the upper funding limit, rather than a maximum you should aim for. Your budget should realistically reflect the costs required for the project and we also welcome applications under this limit

3. Criteria

The application is expected to respond to each of the following five criteria and will be assessed against them by a panel who decide on how to spend the funds.

I) NCOP FUNDING AIMS ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Increase the amount of young people from identified wards progressing into HE by 2020 ◆ Target young people in years 9-13, up to the age of 19 ◆ Increase the number of young people from ethnic minority groups entering HE ◆ Address the under-representation of young white men from disadvantaged backgrounds accessing HE
II) PARTNERSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The application names a lead community and lead university partner ◆ The activity is based on a need or gap that is clearly identifiable as important in the community context ◆ The budget is allocated across partners for their delivery ◆ Demonstrate joint working between partners on activities and outputs
III) INNOVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The proposal can show how what is proposed is in addition to existing provision or activity ◆ The proposal can show what is new/different or untested about what partners are proposing
IV) MUTUAL BENEFIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Input from all proposed partners ◆ Learning for all partners is identified ◆ The proposal addresses how the partnership will support respective partners' work
V) SUSTAINABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Potential to develop a larger knowledge exchange project ◆ Evidence of commitment of partners to explore continuation of collaboration beyond initial funding ◆ Evidence of targeted outcome within seed fund period – e.g. a plan for a journal article, an exhibition, a funding bid etc....

¹ These are the aims of the national NCOP programme. We also particularly welcome applications relating but not restricted to the following broad themes of interest for the Sussex region: projects that address identities; young people's decision making in wider context; the role of location in shaping higher education futures; engaging parents; and exploring the impact of precarity brought by current policy and political contexts on young people's choices. Further information on this can be found in Appendix 1.

4. Making an application:

Key dates 2017/18

Application Deadline	Decisions	Project Start	Funded Period Finishes
18 th December	January '18	February '18	31 st October '18

- *Your application must be made in partnership:* you should identify at least one lead community and one lead academic partner. Your project can also include a broader range of partners as specified on p1. Together you should co-work on writing your application form and budget.
- *The Innovations Fund is managed by CUPP* – you should contact us to discuss your ideas for funding. We can provide you with an application form and support you with making links and developing partnerships. Please see Appendix 1 for more information on the SLN:COP programme.
- *We offer a 'read a bid' service to offer one set of feedback on a draft application.* We aim to have feedback to you within 5 working days, so please bear this in mind. **If you would like us to read, review or comment on bids, we will need to receive a draft by 20th November, 2017. We will be unable to read/comment on any new bids after this date.**
- *Your application form must be agreed by the lead partners and the academic partner's Head of School* – it is important that the person signing this off has at least one week to see the bid and understand the proposal and budget adequately. *We will not accept or facilitate last minute arrangements.*

From experience, we know that finding a partner and working up an application together can take some time to get right. Because of this, last minute applications are not encouraged. You should be in touch with us as soon as you are thinking of applying to the fund so we can offer support and advice ahead of submission.

Making Contact

If you have an idea for a project or would like to talk about finding partners to work with, contact CUPP on 01273 643004 or email cupp@brighton.ac.uk

More information about the SLN:COP programme, information to support your application and copies of these guidance notes can be found at: www.sussexlearningnetwork.org.uk

Background and Context of the NCOP programme

The National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) was developed in 2016 by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) in response to the Government's ambition to double the proportion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds entering Higher Education (HE) by 2020. The programme also aims to increase by 20% the number of young people from ethnic minority groups entering HE and to address the under-representation of young white men from disadvantaged backgrounds accessing HE. The NCOP is a four year programme, which will run in calendar years from January 2017 to December 2020. Consortia are required to target disadvantaged students in Years 9 -13 living in identified ward areas where progression into HE is lower than expected based on GCSE attainment figures. The overall aim of NCOP is to close the gap and increase the number of learners (by a third nationally), residing in these ward areas into higher education.

The Sussex Learning Network (SLN) is one of 29 successful consortia funded to support intensive outreach across the whole of Sussex and is a collaborative partnership consisting of:

- HE providers
- Schools
- Colleges
- Independent training providers
- Local Authorities
- Other organisations such as employers, third sector bodies and local enterprise partnerships

Through NCOP funding, the consortium will seek to:

- Gain a better understanding of vulnerable groups and the barriers they face in accessing, and remaining in higher level learning
- Provide a flexible and responsive offer, which can be tailored and offer a broad range of activities dependent on learner need, and their families/carers/communities to enable progression into Level 4+ learning
- Offer a mixed methodology of delivery of outreach and study, with some taking place online, at school, in the community, at FE/HE, in a work environment
- Support attainment raising and skills development in young people to support and enable progression
- Provide access to funds to overcome practical barriers, such as transport and subsistence
- Develop sustained and progressive programmes which can reach out to young people and support their journey through education
- Monitor and evaluate what is meaningful and effective through impact research

The SLN:COP is currently funded until December 2018. Funding for the following two years (2018 – 2020) is dependent on the consortium meeting its' agreed aims.

Target Wards for Innovations Fund delivery

West Sussex	Brighton & Hove	East Sussex
Bersted	East Brighton	Baird
Bewbush	Hollingbury and Stanmer	Eastern Rother
Broadfield North	Moulsecoomb and Bevendean	Hailsham East
Castle	North Portslade	Hailsham South and West
Durrington		Hampden Park
Eastbrook		Hollington
Ham		Langney
Hillside		Newhaven Denton and Meeching
Northbrook		Newhaven Valley
Orchard		Ore
Pevensey		Peacehaven East
Selsey North		Polegate South
Southlands		Rye
Tilgate		Seaford North
Wick with Toddington		Sidley
Widewater		St Anthony's
		St Michaels
		Tressell
		West St Leonards

Themes of interest that relate specifically to SLN:COP

- **Identities** – how do young people with marginalised identities understand future opportunities? This includes how do young people understand being targeted by intervention activities; and what does it mean to be BAME or identified as WP in a context where you are in a small minority or without recognisable role models?
- **Young peoples' decision-making in wider context** – this may include locating the significance of parents as key influencers in young peoples' decision-making; family responsibilities; peer groups; and wider communities.
- **Engaging parents as active partners** in developing understanding in critically interrogating approaches to widening participation
- **Space, place and the role of location** in shaping higher education futures, both in terms of home postcode and possible work/education institution. Key questions include what is significant in terms of our specific local context, for example young peoples' experiences, expectations and opportunities from rural locations; living on the coastal strip; and in the 'Gatwick Diamond', living in the 'shadow' of the international wealth of London and the South East region.
- **The impact of precarity** and the ability for young people to consider both higher education and the graduate labour market as possible futures. How might the current higher education fees regime, job market and wider post-Brexit context engender particular perceived insecurities for some young people and their wider networks?

END.