



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

CCIN innovation funding – 2018/9 Policy Labs

Would you like to collaborate with other CCIN Members (Councils, Associates and Affiliates) to find co-operative solutions to the challenges facing local government? Is there a co-operative idea that you would like to run in your local area? If yes, we want to hear from you!

As a CCIN member you can apply for up to £10,000 to deliver a Policy Lab. This could be anything from co-operative approaches to tackling food poverty to initiatives that put communities back at the heart of local decision making. We are open to all ideas, the more innovative the better!

So what do we need from you? If you have an idea, please complete the expression of interest form below, telling us about your idea for a Policy Lab. Don't be shy: we want to hear ideas from ALL our members.

Please return your completed EOI to comms@councils.coop

Expression of Interest – CCIN Funding

CCIN Member Authority: Bristol - TBC

Name of CCIN Lead Member: Locality

Name and Job Title: Nick Plumb, Policy Officer

1. What is your idea?

Provide details of what your proposed project is, the story of how you identified the need or opportunity for the proposal and how the money will be spent.

The entire outsourcing market is under increasing scrutiny, following the fall of Carillion. And growing numbers of councils are looking to do things differently. So, Locality's Keep it Local campaign is calling on councils to turn the tide on large-scale outsourcing and [Keep it Local](#) instead:

- For more responsive services that transform lives.
- To reduce long-term pressure on the public sector.
- To ensure precious public resources invest in the local economy.

We believe that now is the opportune moment to try and shift local authority practice towards much more collaborative commissioning models. This work will help us to amplify existing practice and build political momentum.

So this project will: explore the synergies between Locality's [Keep it Local Network](#) and the CCIN; learn about community-focused commissioning practice of others in the CCIN; and share emerging findings from Locality's ongoing action research with councils and community organisations.

Locality is working with Bristol City Council and Bradford MDC on a programme of action research, aiming to drive culture change within the council and shift commissioning practice, so it works much more closely with communities. A key aspect of this project would be to share learnings from this action research with members of the CCIN.

We also recognise that there will be many crossovers in the values and approaches of Keep it Local councils and CCIN members. So, one aim of this work will be to explore these links and whether there is potential bring CCIN members into the growing Keep it Local movement. This project will also provide a platform for sharing the innovative and cooperative commissioning being adopted by CCIN members, and a key outcome will be tangible advice and support to CCIN members on the practical challenges to making Keep it Local vision a reality.

Proposed activities and outputs:

- *Workshop in Bristol for CCIN councils to learn from action research in Bradford and Bristol and Locality's wider Keep it Local campaign*
- *Webinar on the same topic for those who can't travel to Bristol*
- *Desk-research into innovative commissioning approaches adopted by CCIN members to gather Keep it Local case studies*
- *Report sharing learning from desk-research, workshop and webinar, profiling the work of CCIN members to Keep it Local and exploring the crossovers in values between CCIN councils and Keep it Local councils.*
- *Launch event on publication of the report*

Breakdown of budget:

- *Contribution to Locality policy staff time = £6k*
- *Events and publications (Bristol workshop, webinar, launch event, report) = £2k*
- *Expenses to engage with CCIN members and Locality members = £2k*

2. Who will you work with?

A key requirement of Policy Lab Funding is that you work in partnership with other CCIN members. We recommend engaging a minimum of **three** other CCIN members (Affiliates and Associates should bid alongside Full Council members) to create a working group to support the development of your project.

Locality will undertake the main research and logistical work for the project. We are proposing a bid alongside Bristol City Council. Due to only joining CCIN very recently (October 2018), we are

still seeking contact with the CCIN lead officer there. However, Locality's key contact for our action research project with BCC, Penny Germon, has indicated in principle agreement.

We also have written commitment from Plymouth and Newcastle Councils to join our working group which will support the development of this project. Gary Wallace (more detail on his role below) is a member of the steering group for the wider Keep it Local project and has provided invaluable support and advice in driving the project forward.

Proposed working group:

*Penny Germon, Bristol City Council, Neighbourhoods and Communities Service Manager
Darin Halifax, Senior Policy Advisor, Plymouth City Council (Lead CCIN officer)
Gary Wallace, Public Health Specialist, Plymouth City Council
Phil Hunter, Senior Policy Specialist, Newcastle City Council (Lead CCIN officer)
Laura Choake, Commissioning Programme Manager, Newcastle City Council*

Other CCIN members

We will, of course, seek to engage as many CCIN members as possible who have shown an interest in shifting their commissioning practice. For example, members and officers from Croydon, Stevenage and Sunderland are already signed up to our Keep it Local Network mailing list and have attended Keep it Local Network events.

As part of Locality's wider Keep it Local work, we have undertaken a process of local authority mapping: analysing councils' social value strategies, procurement policies and commissioning strategies. So, we already have a good sense of the state of play at CCIN members, and who to target.

3. What are the outcomes you hope to achieve?

What are the outcomes you hope to achieve through this project and how will you know if your outcomes are achieved? What is your measure of success?

The key aim of this work will be to engage with CCIN members, explore linkages with Locality's Keep it Local campaign, and share learning and best practice.

So a key outcome is for Cooperative Councils to be aware of and engage in what we're doing. We will measure this through:

- *Numbers of individuals from CCIN signed up to the Keep it Local Network mailing list*
- *Level of attendance at the Bristol workshop and to the webinar*
- *Engagement on social media of our final report*
- *Downloads of our final report*

This project will also provide a platform for sharing the innovative and cooperative commissioning being adopted by CCIN members. Another key outcome will be tangible advice and support to CCIN members on the practical challenges to making Keep it Local vision a reality. We will measure this through:

- *Testimonials from CCIN members, collected through feedback forms disseminated after the workshop and webinar.*

Ultimately, we would want cooperative councils to feel like Locality's Keep it Local campaign is something they can see themselves in and want to join what is a growing movement. So a measure of success would be CCIN members publicly endorsing and displaying Keep it Local principles and joining the Keep it Local Network.

4. How does your project support the aims and objectives of the Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network?

The Co-operative Councils Innovation Network aims to frame the debate on the future of sustainable solutions to public sector challenges. Our work will ultimately improve outcomes for communities by enabling members to develop radical innovation in policy and practice, sharing best practice and learning, and enabling innovators to chart new territory together. Please provide details of how your project will support this aim.

Locality's [Keep it Local Network](#) aims to do just this. The existing infrastructure is there - this project aims to build and expand this.

Events we have already held through the Keep it Local Network – workshops in Leeds, Hackney and Newcastle; a webinar; a policy roundtable; and workshops and speeches at our annual convention – have enabled us to collect a bank of case studies of radical innovation in policy and practice. This learning is regularly shared throughout the Network.

Our position as the national membership network for community organisations allows us to bring a diverse range of people together at workshops – not only engaging councillors and council officers, but also VCSE groups. This range of attendees at workshops and webinars is vital in ensuring partners on all sides of the commissioning landscape can learn from one another.

5. How does your project demonstrate the Values and Principles of the Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network?

Our Network is based on the Co-operative values developed by the International Co-operative Alliance: “self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity... honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others”. Further details about the CCIN's Values and Principles is available [here](#). Please provide details of how your project will demonstrate the CCIN's Values and Principles.

Locality's Keep it Local work is rooted in co-operative values. A Keep it Local approach to commissioning means:

- *Moving from competition to collaboration.*
- *Recognising the power in communities, and harnessing this for the delivery of public services.*
- *Councils' recognising that their role is to enable and empower communities and community organisations to play a greater role in the delivery of public services.*

The approach to the project – focused on sharing and learning, discussion between councils and VCS groups and collaboration between CCIN members – is also rooted in co-operative values.

6. How will you share your learning with the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network?

How will you share your learning with other CCIN members? How will you share your learning beyond the project? This could be through producing a report, holding a workshop or presenting at the CCIN's annual showcase event.

As mentioned above, we plan to hold a practical workshop in Bristol and a webinar for CCIN members to learn from the action research Locality is undertaking in Bristol and Bradford. We will also be producing a report and holding a launch event to share learning. This will be coupled with media work – social and press – to ensure we can share learning from CCIN members beyond the project.

We will also disseminate learning through existing Keep it Local Network, which has almost 500 members. Its members are highly engaged councillors, commissioners, community organisations, policy experts, procurement officers and consultants with an interest in innovative commissioning methods.