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**LSIS and Skills Funding Agency Equality and Diversity Partnership Project: Case Study and Project Management template**

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| Provider and project name | **Independent Action**  Kirklees Adult Learning in partnership with Fit4funding, West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service and the Kirklees Sensory Impairment Development Group. |
| Contact person  (Please include an email address or telephone number if you are happy to be contacted by other providers) | Kate Fleming  Adult Lifelong Learning Manager  Kirklees Council  [Kate.fleming@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:Kate.fleming@kirklees.gov.uk) |
| Briefly outline the aim and scope of your project | **Independent Action** is a collaborative project which develops and pilots a training package for learners from Kirklees with sensory impairments (auditory and visual) that will enable learners to play an active role in the Big Society Agenda by contributing to fundraising and accounting functions for voluntary, community and faith organisations in their communities. |
| What was the main issue or problem the project was trying to resolve? | To reduce isolation and promote inclusivity for learners with hearing and/or sight impediments through innovative approaches. In particular to promote engagement of and participation by people with sensory impairment in the management and development of Third Sector organisations, particularly in fundraising, management and financial aspects. |
| Which organisations were in the partnership and what were their specific roles? | Kirklees Council – lead body  Fit4funding (The Charities Information Bureau) – project management and training(accredited and unaccredited) on Fundraising  WYCAS (West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service) – training on financial procedures  Kirklees Sensory Impairment Development Group |
| What are the main **outputs** of the project?  *For example:*   * *If the project included an event, how many people attended?* * *If the project included training, how many people were trained?* * *Were any resources, materials or reports produced (include web links if available)?* | Engagement of 20 learners in total over the different aspects of the course  Training  1. Funding and Fundraising Skills for the Voluntary and Community Sectors this would focus on refining existing materials following pilot work – 4 day equivalent course or combined face to face and e-learning – accredited by OCN  2. Developing a successful funding application – 2 day face to face course (for learners who had previous knowledge/experience)  3. Financial rules and procedures – 1 day face to face course (this is a component of an OCN accredited course)  New or specially adapted learning materials  Good practice manual |
| What are the main **impacts and outcomes** of the project?  *For example:*   * *a change in behaviour by learners or staff* * *a removal of barriers to learning* * *an impact on the community* * *changes affected by senior managers* * *changes for the organisation*   *Please also specify whether these are actual or expected* | * Increased confidence in engagement in fundraising and financial management * Integration of strategies to engage sensory impaired learners on future training courses from Fit4funding and WYCAS * Removal of barriers to learning for blind, visually impaired and deaf learners (actual). |
| When do you expect to see the main impacts, outputs and outcomes of the project to be realised? | Mainly by April 2011, through evaluation sheets. Sample comments.  *“We will use the updated information for future bids”*  *“……to provide funder with clear concise objectives…..”*  *“look at things more positively and put in more orderly fashion”*  *“We will review (finance) practices and tighten up in areas…..implement relevant policies…..”*  *“I hope that these courses will be allowed to continue”.*  In the longer term:  Fit4funding will raise barriers with funders and encourage them to:  1. Give sufficient time for sensory impaired groups to respond to opportunities  2. Consider whether format of forms is accessible to the sensory impaired or whether they have alternative formats or mechanisms in place.  3. Greater emphasis in fit4funding and WYCAS training on needs of sensory impaired learners  *“I will try and involve more deaf members to be involved in fundraising”*  *“…… more active in completing funding applications”* |
| How many learners did the project have an impact on, and what was the impact?  How many of them were from the equality groups you aimed to benefit? | 21 people attended training and 2 learners attended 2 sessions. 13 had sensory impairments.  The impact was that new skills were developed for visually impaired, blind and deaf people to enable them to access funding for their community projects, including: increased awareness of funding options; planning more community projects and needs analysis;  ‘*I’ve learnt a lot – made you think about what you’re doing which is the most important thing’*;  ‘*I know a heck of a lot more about funding now’; it has allowed me to think more carefully about funding and the criteria to follow*’;  ‘*I will look at things more positively and put in a more orderly fashion*.’  Of the 21, 16 had a sight or hearing impairment and the remainder are members of visually impaired or deaf-led groups, so their skills will be used to benefit that community. |
| How did working with LSIS impact on your organisation/partnership? | It enabled us to make new links (e.g. with the Nerve Centre in Huddersfield), research in more depth ways to make training accessible, and develop new materials. |
| How did the project represent good value for money?  *For example:*   * *Did partnership working enable efficiencies?* * *Did the project create savings for the wider community, for example public health, crime prevention, or community cohesion?* | * Use of existing materials as starting point. * Liaison through SID network * Previous engagement of F4F and WYCAS with SID group * Shared vision within partnership group   In the long term the project will create savings for the wider community, particularly in health and adult care, as the learners’ own projects attract external funding to tackle isolation and promote wellbeing amongst people with sensory impairments. |
| How did you involve senior managers in your project? | Senior managers involved in steering group.  Senior Manager of F4F managing project |
| Apart from partnership members, were other stakeholders involved in your project and what role did they play? | We took advice on accessible training methods from members of Kirklees Visual Impairment Network, Huddersfield Deaf Centre, the Nerve Centre (for people with neurological conditions) and from individual signers. |
| If learners were involved in planning and delivering the project, please specify how, and how many. | Learner with severe visual impairment involved in developing materials.  Deaf Society involved in development of additional event, including a meeting with a deaf learner. |
| How have you raised awareness about the project and how have you disseminated the findings? | * Through attending meetings * Through SID network * Through final report   We also plan to share lessons learnt with other learning providers and funding advisers, through networks and by creating a new area on fit4funding’s website, and to raise issues of inaccessible funding processes with funders. |
| Will the project continue after LSIS funding has stopped and how will this be achieved? | Access to training will be available for sensory impaired learners. The training providers will also offer ongoing support to learners who need advice on funding applications.  Approaches will be made to other West Yorkshire authorities to provide similar training. |
| Did you encounter any difficulties in implementing this project?  *For example:*   * *Lack of learner engagement* * *Staff resistance* * *Lack of full engagement from partnership members*   *How did you overcome any difficulties?* | Yes  People previously identified as interested, withdrew or were not able to attend on designated days, despite consultation on most appropriate timing of courses. Despite the recession and funding cuts, more learners than we expected were in employment (outside the voluntary sector) or in full-time higher education, which required us to organise extra sessions outside standard working hours.  We did consider offering e-learning options to deaf learners to address the timing issue, as e-learning can be completed to suit the learner, but as the target group were all new to funding issues and terminology we felt more immediate tutor input with interpreters would be more appropriate, although e-learning could provide progression opportunities for those learners keen to develop their skills further.  Lack of engagement of sensory impaired learners on financial planning training. We rearranged the second day of first course to accommodate learners.  Contacting deaf learners was particularly difficult, and was most effective by text message and through posters at the Deaf Centre, which most people visit only weekly, so this slowed the recruitment process. |
| What lessons did you learn from the project relevant for other learning and skills providers?  For example:   * Should the project be repeated elsewhere? * If you started the project knowing what you do now, would you do anything differently? | The project could be replicated elsewhere, and the learners were very appreciative of the efforts made to meet their various access needs. Without this extra planning and investment, sensory impaired people will continue to be marginalised from this kind of training.  For visually impaired learners, visual and kinaesthetic methods are inappropriate, and most information has to be taken in aurally. This also required cutting down the volume of information. We did find it possible to introduce variety through a mixture of short lectures, discussions, podcasts and exercises where the tutor read the task aloud to assist people with specific ocular conditions.  For deaf learners, visual methods are good but even clipart can raise problems, as its use often relies on visual puns which may not be clear to learners whose first language is not English. Simplified vocabulary is needed, and where two signers are used there can be issues of them using different signs to try to explain specialist terms. PowerPoint can be used, but where the tutor is expanding on the points verbally, learners have to switch their attention between the screen and the interpreter.  We now know that the timescales were very tight – we avoided planning delivery for January and early February in case of bad weather, but this give limited time for contingency planning when we needed to add extra sessions. We waited for a SID group meeting to talk to learners about the courses on offer, which also delayed recruitment; with hindsight, it would have been better to contact the member groups directly at an earlier stage. |
| Additional comments | - |