

Monthly Update Providing Key Information about the Third Sector

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RESPONDING TO THE RECESSION

Delivery of Modernisation Fund to help sector through recession

The Modernisation Fund element of the government's 'Real Help' action plan to help the third sector through the recession is to be managed by a partnership of the Futurebuilders and Capacitybuilders agencies. Futurebuilders will offer loans (between £30,000 and £500,000) to larger third sector organisations with a turnover of £750,000 or more, mainly to support mergers and connected financial and capacity issues - <http://preview.tinyurl.com/b2n4qw>.

Capacitybuilders will be launching a programme in the early summer offering smaller grants to third sector organisations with a turnover of under a million pounds to help explore the benefits and meet the costs of collaboration, merger or restructuring - <http://preview.tinyurl.com/c8r982>.

Resources for the downturn

The umbrella body for local sector support NAVCA has set up a section on its web site to help its members provide support to avoid the worst aspects of the recession, at <http://www.navca.org.uk/localvs/recession>. This includes a useful round-up of resources from other organisations.

Compact Voice has a two-page practical guide 'Key Compact Principles for the Economic Downturn' to help you identify the Compact commitments (the agreement between the third sector and government/public bodies) to be aware of in these difficult times. In Word format, 112KB, <http://preview.tinyurl.com/cafots>.

Regional Economic Forum (REF): meets monthly for the duration of the economic downturn. Mark Ereira Guyer is the VCS rep if you want to put items and issues before the region's political and economic leaders. Mark put forward the effects of the downturn on the VCS based on the recent COVER survey at

the February meeting. To give Mark any further evidence on the impact on your VCS organisation: mark@egconsulting.co.uk

Financial Education

The Financial Services Authority (FSA), the UK's financial regulator, is offering VCS organisations FREE financial education programmes to help you manage your money in the present economic climate. Presentations are available to groups of a minimum of 20 staff or volunteers and the FSA have suggested that groups may wish to liaise to share an event if providing sufficient numbers are a difficulty. There is also an alternative option of an interactive CD Rom covering the presentation and a text of the guide. For details or to book a place email: mike.bailey@fsa.gov.uk more help available at www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk www.whataboutmoney.info or www.fsa.gov.uk/financial_capability

Red Foundation,

Red Foundation, with support from Capacity Builders, is running a series of training courses in 11 cities throughout England in March. The courses, costing £25, are aimed at advisors in infrastructure bodies and focus on how professional skills volunteers can help charities face some of the challenges of recession. For more details go to www.redfoundation.org/whatwedo/redcci

Help for Local Authorities with cash in Icelandic banks

The Government has acted to protect the public from potential service cuts or council tax increases that could result from local authority investments in Icelandic banks while efforts continue to recover the money. Local Government Minister John Healey has laid regulations before Parliament that enable authorities to postpone any possible budgetary impact of this until 2010-11. More information at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk>

How to Tackle Worklessness

The IDeA is working closely with experts in the field and with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Communities and Local Government to develop a series of 'How to...' guides to help practitioners who have a role in tackling worklessness and meeting local employment outcomes. These recession-focused guides contain practical advice and tips for action and support and will highlight good practice. Access the guides from: <http://www.idea.gov.uk/>

NEWS FOR SUPPORT AGENCIES

NCVO Funding Commission

NCVO has set up a Funding Commission to look at the funding of the voluntary sector over the next decade. The Commission has launched an initial phase of

consultation to identify key themes to explore, which will run until 13 May.
<http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/fundingcommission>

Futurebuilders consortium wins £100m DoH contract

A Futurebuilders England-led consortium has won the contract to administer the Department of Health (DH)'s £100m Social Enterprise Investment Fund from June. <http://digbig.com/4yjtf> or <http://www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk>

Futurebuilders Cashflow Fund

Futurebuilders has launched a new £4m fund to provide short-term cashflow to organisations who are delivering public service contracts. The Cashflow Fund will offer bridging loans, reserves cover and overdraft guarantees, either on their own or as part of a Futurebuilders Full Investment. Packages will be tailor-made to meet the needs and circumstances of the organisation, with a minimum investment of £50,000. There is no upper limit. <http://digbig.com/4ymkm> or <http://www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk>

Single Regional Strategy/ Joint Implementation Plan, 2009/31: The plan gets final approval from the EEDA Board in April. In the Skills and Employability Section, Table 58, Creating an environment for a thriving 3rd Sector, offers hope that national policy, regional plans and investments and local delivery through the LAAs (Local Area Agreements) will see threads of investment, national, regional and local put in place to support a 'thriving 3rd sector' across the region in the years to come.

SKILLS

Following the 9th March VCS/LSC Working Together conference and regional consultation on the new 3rd Sector Skills Council (includes VCS) and its Sector Qualifications Strategy regional work is underway to refresh the forward plan of VCS engagement with Train to Gain, National Apprenticeships and the 3rd Sector Skills body. For further details of how to get involved contact VCS Regional Skills Lead: nikki.bennett@cover-east.org

LSC reorganisation

From August 2010 new bodies will replace the LSC: YPLA, Young People's Learning Agency (14-19 skills funding); NAS, National Apprenticeships Service; SFA, Skills Funding agency (Adults); and the Adult Advancement Service (IAG/ Careers guidance). Transitional arrangements are underway to transfer LSC 14-19 funded learning to Local Education Authorities via a regional body of the LSC, Go East and the Directors of Children and Family Services. Details on the changes to other former LSC services are expected at the end of March 2009.

Emergency £1.6m for women's crisis charities

The Government has given an extra £1.6m to an emergency grant fund for

voluntary organisations working with the victims of sexual abuse and rape that are at risk of closure. <http://digbig.com/4ymyj> or <http://www.equalities.gov.uk>

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Working Together - Public Services on your side

The Government has set out its agenda for the future of public services in a new document which details the steps the Government is taking to give people, communities and frontline staff the information and real power they need to personalise public services. <http://www.hmg.gov.uk/workingtogether.aspx>

Researching how the Compact applies to European funding

Background research by the Commission for the Compact in the autumn found that there was some confusion around the application of the Compact (the agreement setting out shared commitments and guidelines for working between government and the voluntary and community sector) and the administration of European Structural Funding. This has led the Commission to initiate a research study, focusing on 15 case studies of third sector organisations who have applied for European Structural Funding, to clarify matters. News item at <http://preview.tinyurl.com/ad53cn>.

LEGAL MATTERS

NJC pay scales 2008/09

The arbitration panel has awarded an additional 0.3% award with effect from 1 April 2008. The new figures represent an increase of 2.75% on the April 2007 payscales and not a 0.3% increase on the previously issued April 08 figures. The new scales are available at <http://www.navca.org.uk/localvs/scales>

New form P45 to be used from April

Employers must use the new A4 version of form P45 from 6th April. Introduced in October 2008, the new form includes date of birth and gender. <http://digbig.com/4ymjq> or <http://nds.coi.gov.uk/>

Public Benefit and Fee Charging

Charity Commission guidance on fee-charging for charities.

<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publicbenefit/pbfeecha.asp>

SANDY ADIRONDACK: AMENDMENTS TO THE LEGAL UPDATE WEBSITE FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Charity law:

- Updated Charities Act implementation timetable
www.sandy-a.co.uk/managing.htm#charitiesact

- Charity Commission guidance on public benefit (including for specific sectors) and on reporting on public benefit in annual reports
www.sandy-a.co.uk/managing.htm#publicbenefit
or go direct to www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publicbenefit/default.asp
- Registration of churches and other previously excepted charities
www.sandy-a.co.uk/managing.htm#charityreg-excepted
or go direct to www.charitycommission.gov.uk/registration/regreq.asp

Employment:

- Statutory annual leave goes up from 4.8 to 5.6 weeks from 1 April.
<http://www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#annualleave>
- Right to request flexible working is extended to parents of children under 17 from 6 April. <http://www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#parentflexible>
- Tax allowances and national insurance thresholds are increased from 6 April.
<http://www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#taxallowances>
- Statutory sick pay increased to £79.15 per week, statutory maternity, paternity and adoption pay to £123.06 per week from 6 April. <http://www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#sickpay> and <http://www.sandy-a.co.uk/employment.htm#matpatpay> .

THE ENVIRONMENT

EAC People management guide

Whether you are managing staff, volunteers or trustees, this publication will provide you with information and ideas on how to build sustainable development into your people management processes.

<http://www.everyactioncounts.org.uk/guides>

PUBLICATIONS

Voluntary But Not Amateur: A guide to the law for voluntary organisations and community groups

8th edition from DSC. <http://www.dsc.org.uk/Publications/Law/@2911>

Compact Proofing Toolkit

Havco. <http://digbig.com/4yjtx> or <http://www.havcoharingey.org.uk>

The Impact of ChangeUp on Support and Frontline Organisations

National Audit Office report. <http://digbig.com/4yhtg> or <http://www.nao.org.uk>

Work-related stress - together we can manage it

The Health and Safety Executive. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress>

Civil society: a framework for action

NCVO. <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/about/index.asp?id=12788>

Transforming adult social care: Access to Information, Advice and Advocacy

IDeA. <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/9454528>

Managing front line managers

Acas new guide on management, advising senior managers on how to get the best out of their frontline managers.

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=802>

Delivering equality and diversity in the workplace

Acas new equality and diversity guide addressing the vital role monitoring plays in equality and diversity in the workplace.

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=818>.

Summary to Working in a Consortium

Following the release of the full version, a summary guide to 'Working in a Consortium' has been published by the Office of the Third Sector for voluntary organisations, for use when considering this approach as a way to get involved in the delivery of public sector contracts. Download (pdf format, 342KB) from <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/136178/consortium%20summary.pdf>.

FUNDING

Supporting communities with migration

The Government has announced details of a new £70m fund to support communities in managing local pressures from migration. Funding will be allocated to local projects from Government Offices working closely with local partners. It will be targeted at projects which have identified innovative solutions to migration related pressures - where possible involving and benefiting a number of local services.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1180107>

Young Roots

Providing grants of between £3,000 and £25,000, the Heritage Lottery Fund's Young Roots Programme aims to involve 13-25 year-olds in finding out about their heritage, developing skills, building confidence and promoting community involvement. <http://digbig.com/4yjwb> or <http://www.hlf.org.uk>

Laptop and broadband for community groups

The latest round of the BT Community Connections award scheme opened on 17 March. Organisations working in any field of community benefit from anywhere in the UK (or Republic of Ireland) can apply for a laptop and a year's worth of broadband connection. Past winners and/or new applicants can also now apply

together to form a cluster application. In the past voluntary projects, silver-surfers, conservation organisations, family support groups, sports teams and youth groups have all been supported. The closing date for online applications is 11th June (2 days earlier for postal). <http://www.btcommunityconnections.com/>

Adventure playgrounds

Play England has been contracted by the Department for Children, Schools and Families to manage a £1.5m funding programme for the refurbishment of adventure playgrounds run by the third sector. The programme will run from April 2009 to March 2010 with funding of up to £19,000 per project.

<http://digbig.com/4ymjt> or <http://www.playengland.org.uk>

Reaching Communities

The Reaching Communities funding programme of the Big Lottery Fund is still open. Demand for grants has reduced hugely. Recently 50% of applications which got through stage one were subsequently funded. Up to five years funding is available under Reaching Communities. Now is the time to encourage local organisations to apply.

http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_reaching_communities

Awards for All

Despite rumours to the contrary, the funding programme Awards for All remains open at least for 2009/10. This immensely popular programme provides grants of up to £10,000 for local organisations and community groups.

<http://www.awardsforall.org.uk/england>

People's millions

Big Lottery Fund's People's Millions competition 2009 will give communities throughout the UK the opportunity to win local public support and share in £3.5m of lottery funding. Grants of up to £50,000 will be provided for projects that transform local environments and offer opportunities or facilities for people to take part and enjoy their local area. The deadline for receipt of entries is 15 May.

http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_peoples_millions

Architectural Heritage Fund

The Architectural Heritage Fund provides grants and low-cost loans for the conservation of listed or scheduled buildings, or those in conservation areas. Applicants must be registered charities or Building Preservation Trusts. Grants for repair are not available, only grants for conservation appraisal. Deadlines for 2009 are 7 May, 13 August and 22 October. <http://www.ahfund.org.uk>

OTHER NEWS

Updates on the new Vetting and Barring Scheme

The Independent Safeguarding Authority has announced further details on the commencement of the new Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) checks for those working with children and vulnerable adults. While the legal requirement for employees to register with the VBS and for employers to check their status will not now come into force until November 2010, from July 2010 all new entrants to roles working with vulnerable groups and those switching jobs to a new provider will be able to register and be assessed.

<http://www.isa.gov.org.uk/Default.aspx?page=385>.

Also, from October 2009 eligibility for Enhanced CRB checks will expand to include more employment and voluntary positions, and Standard CRB checks will no longer be available for those working with children or the vulnerable. See Criminal Records Bureau summary of changes here:

<http://www.crb.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=5290>, or check updates on the ISA web site at <http://www.isa.gov.org.uk>. The Vetting and Barring Scheme contact centre is now live on 0300 123 1111, office hours.

Change4Life

Change4Life, (the DH campaign to encourage every family in England to eat well, take more exercise, and live longer) has published a range of toolkits, including a Top Tips leaflet for families, supporter poster and children's colouring/activity sheet. <http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/PartnerTools.aspx> or <http://www.nhs.uk/change4life>

IT4Communities

Over 600 keen new IT volunteers have registered with lead IT volunteering charity, iT4Communities. Third sector organisations can make use of them now by registering their IT need at <http://www.it4communities.org.uk>. It costs just £85 for 12 months support. Read more at

<http://www.it4communities.org.uk/it4c/open/charity>

Free Faiths IT Helpline for East of England

To support faith and interfaith groups who need help with IT problems, the East of England Faiths Council has teamed up with i-TRUST to provide straightforward, personal advice on IT. Call 07865 971221 between 10am and 12 noon on Mondays and Thursdays; between 3.00pm and 5.00pm on Tuesdays or email faithsIThelp@afl.org.uk.

More Symantec security products for charities

Symantec has added some of their Enterprise products to their UK charity donation scheme, managed by CTX. The products include Backup Exec for Windows Servers and Symantec AntiVirus Corporate Edition. More details at http://www.ctxchange.org/?dm_i=4Y0,N9V,C7Q9T,1BF1,1.

More volunteers to provide management consultancy

The Cranfield Trust has seen a surge in the number of skilled commercial sector managers keen to volunteer, which means that it has greater capacity to provide

management consultancy to the voluntary sector across the country. Projects covered can range from strategic and business planning to marketing, financial management, IT and human resources advice. See <http://www.cranfieldtrust.org>.

Reducing Re-offending Volunteering and Mentoring Network

Clinks have launched a network to support organisations working with offenders to involve volunteers - providing resources, up-to-date news, and a chance to get opinions heard. The network is looking for anyone interested in the subject of volunteering with or by offenders to get involved. nathan.dick@clinks.org .

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