



## **Collaboration for NLDC Funding Suffolk Learning Consortium**



**Suffolk Association of  
Voluntary Organisations**

### **Summary**

In 2008 the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) amended its Guidance Notes to Statutory Authorities for NLDC funding, making it a requirement for them to engage with their Third Sector Learning Consortium to co-manage this funding. (The LSC had invested in the formation of Third Sector Consortia across the country and wanted to see them being used).

### **About Suffolk Learning Consortium**

The Suffolk Learning Consortium was formed as a Managed Network (led by the Suffolk Association of Voluntary Organizations) in April 2007 as a Suffolk LSC / ESF funded project, to help prepare the Third Sector in Suffolk for the forthcoming changes to LSC (and other public) funding;  
*to provide a mutually beneficial consortium structure for Third Sector learning providers in Suffolk, in order to support and enable all member organisations to access funding, develop their capacity and achieve high standards of quality and performance in meeting the needs of learners and in tackling disadvantage and advancing equity and social inclusion.*

### **The challenge**

#### **Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC) funding management**

In 2008 the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) amended its Guidance Notes to Statutory Authorities for NLDC funding, making it a requirement for them to engage with their Third Sector Learning Consortium to co-manage this funding. (The LSC had invested in the formation of Third Sector Consortia across the country and wanted to see them being used).

### **The activity**

Suffolk County Council Community Learning and Skills Development (CLSD) were proactive in approaching the Suffolk Learning Consortium, in recognition of our established membership, website and partnership working, to joint manage this funding.

During the first year, 2008/9, we jointly developed a simple application process with supporting Guidance Notes, together with Spreadsheets to monitor applications (to generate an application score to assist in selection) and delivery.

Since 2009, thanks to having robust established systems in place, we have been able to launch NLDC funding during Adult Learners Week, at a major networking event to review successful NLDC projects of the last year, launch NLDC funding for the coming year, and provide updates on Sector News.

### **The outcomes**

- Real collaboration between Adult and Community Learning (ACL) and Third Sector
- Recognition of the skills and value of working with the Third Sector
- Development of simple Funding Application Forms to make application easy
- Development of robust and fair selection process
- Development of comprehensive monitoring system to track delivery and targets (required for regular returns to the Skills Funding Agency)
- Interest from other counties to adopt our processes
- Minimum amount spent on administration to allow maximum spend on delivery
- Processes adopted for similar funding streams i.e. Migrant Impact Fund.

### **The impact**

- Development of simple Funding Application Forms to make application easy
- Development of robust and fair selection process
- Development of comprehensive monitoring system to track delivery and targets (required for regular returns to the Skills Funding Agency)
- Minimum amount spent on administration to allow maximum spend on delivery
- Processes adopted for similar funding streams. i.e. Migrant Impact Fund.

### **The lessons learned**

- Collaborative working benefits all collaborators
- The Third Sector are notorious at not celebrating success
- Funding Application Forms do not have to be complicated.

### **Useful links**

- [Suffolk Training Advice Point website](#)
- [Suffolk Learning Consortium website](#)
- [Third Sector National Learning Alliance \(TSNLA\)](#)