

Consortia Development Fund 2007-2008

Guidance for ChangeUp Consortia

Contents

1.	Introduction	page 1
2.	Background	page 2
3.	Rationale	page 2
4.	Key principles	page 3
5.	Outcomes	page 3
6.	Delivery Framework	page 4
7.	Regional Allocation	page 5
8.	Timetable	page 6
9.	Statement on Letter of Intent, Terms of Grant and Monitoring	page 6

Appendices

1	Consortium Development	page 7
2	Regionwide Consortia Collaboration	pages 8 -9
3	Infrastructure Development Strategy 2008-14	page 10
4	Infrastructure Action / Business Plan2008-11	page 11

Introduction

Capacitybuilders is making £7 million funding available to consortia via the **Consortia Development Fund** (CDF) in the financial year from 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008. By focusing on consortia development Capacitybuilders is both reaffirming its commitment to working with consortia but also its intention that consortia should be fit for purpose to meet the ChangeUp aims.

This guidance sets out Capacitybuilders' role and expectations in co-ordinating the Consortia Development Fund. Capacitybuilders is aiming to provide a coherent package of consortia support and infrastructure development across the regions. This Fund aims to implement that approach by ensuring there are minimum characteristics to the planning and delivery of support that are common to each region. The Fund builds on £7million made available to consortia under the Continuation Fund for the last financial year (2006-07).

Background

Capacitybuilders was established in April 2006, in part to provide a consistent approach to ChangeUp across English regions. As well as having taken over responsibility for the delivery of ChangeUp from the nine Government Offices, lead government responsibility for its activities has changed from the Home Office to the Office of the Third Sector within the Cabinet Office. Capacitybuilders is currently consulting on its proposed priorities and strategic objectives in its draft strategic framework, "Destination 2014" as well as responding to recommendations in recent commissioned reports on the work of the national Hubs and an analysis of consortia Infrastructure Investment Plans.

Against this backdrop, Capacitybuilders has already delivered two substantive VCS infrastructure funding programmes since its launch, the "Consortium Projects Programme" and "Improving Reach".

In focussing its latest program, the CDF, on consortia development, Capacitybuilders understands that different consortia models have developed across the 9 Government Office regions, reflecting not only geographical and historical regional differences but also the strengths, weaknesses and "politics" of the sector in each region.

Capacitybuilders also recognises that consortia are at different stages of development. We wish to build on what already exists by providing support and resources for further development. We also need to ensure that benefits reach the front line.

Rationale for the Consortia Development Fund

We have welcomed feedback from the sector, since our launch in April, and have used this to inform Capacitybuilders' thinking about expectations of consortia. This feedback indicates that people within the 3rd Sector and public sector are keen to see that consortia are fit for purpose by demonstrating that they

- Can ensure that the benefit of investment reaches front line organisations
- Are inclusive, taking account of equality and diversity issues
- Can deal with conflicts of interest [decision making and financial allocation]
- Have effective monitoring and evaluation systems in place
- Have an accurate picture of need and provision within the 3rd sector, which informs the development of strategies / action plans and highlights priorities.
- Understand and take account of the social and political context and structures when developing strategies and plans.
- Can and are engaging in local and regional planning processes (Local Area Agreements, Regional Economic Strategies, etc)

This feedback is a mix of informal intelligence [through conferences and discussions] and findings from commissioned research

For background information about ChangeUp, Capacitybuilders, definition of infrastructure, other programmes etc. please refer to the Capacitybuilders website www.capacitybuilders.org.uk

Our commissioned review by Jo Durning (September 2006) and subsequent Board decisions about the future delivery of national support services [Hubs] can be found at <http://www.capacitybuilders.org.uk/info/story/default.asp?item=7>

Our commissioned review of consortia Infrastructure Investment Plans by the Good Foundations Consultancy (October 2006) can be found at <http://www.capacitybuilders.org.uk/info/story/default.asp?item=12>

The "Equalities and Diversity Strategy" can be found on the National ChangeUp website at www.changeup.org.uk/documents/MainstreamingDiversityFinalReport-180106.doc

Key principles of the Consortia Development Fund

The overall principle that has governed our thinking about the design and delivery of the Consortia Development Fund is that it must improve the quality of the consortium model and reach or surpass some basic benchmarks by March 2008.

There should be a commitment to:

- Improving performance and quality
- Incorporating Equality and diversity
- A focus on Outcomes and impact
- Accountability
- Partnership within the sector and between sectors

Capacitybuilders will be working alongside consortia as a critical friend to provide practical support and foster a consistent approach to these issues

Another principle is the commitment to build on and retain the local knowledge base as part of capacity building. Capacitybuilders will

- encourage planning and development activity to be carried out 'in house' by identifying existing staff to undertake the work and using the available funds to backfill. New staff with appropriate skills should be recruited where this is not possible.
- develop the potential for consortia peer assessment through the CDF period, as a sustainable resource and sector skill

We consider that external consultants should only be used when the capacity does not exist within the organisation / consortium.

Desired Outcomes from Consortia Develop Fund investment.

As a result of CDF investment, we intend that, by March 2008, each region will have the necessary evidence base, strategies, plans and structures to 'look outwards' and negotiate / collaborate with other partners to resource and deliver high quality infrastructure services to front line third sector organisations.

The outcomes we are looking for from the CDF investment are:

1. **Consortium Development** - evidence of operating to minimum standards within a performance framework applied nationally.
These will include
 - Team Development and internal relationships
 - User Engagement
 - Partnership development within the consortium
 - Links between sectors and external relationships
 - Performance management
 - Equality and diversity
 - Communication
2. **Region-wide Consortium Collaboration** - evidence of consortia collaboration across each region and engagement with key regional and sub-regional public sector agencies.
 - a region-wide group which consists of [or includes] representatives of each consortium [a regional VCS infrastructure steering group
 - a region-wide group which consists of [or includes] representatives from key public sector agencies and the regional VCS Steering Group [a regional strategic partnership]
3. **Strategic Planning to 2014** - creating strategic plans at all levels for the period April 2008 to March 2014 with appropriate milestones
4. **Business Planning to 2011** - creating action/business plans at all levels for the period April 2008 to March

Capacitybuilders recognises that many consortia have already taken significant steps towards these outcomes and the CDF investment is intended to build on these developments wherever possible within a coherent national framework

Delivery Framework

In responding to the issues described above, Capacitybuilders intends to be more directive than it has previously been in what the Fund is to be used for, as a means of getting all consortia to a consistent baseline of planning and development / organisation.

Each consortium will be offered an allocation of funds to achieve the broad outcomes – there will be no competing for funds or application in the usual sense – and an agreement will be signed which details the outcomes, activity to reach the outcomes,

and support available. Regional Co-ordinators will work closely with and provide support / advice to consortia , including facilitating discussion about how best to allocate the funds across consortia within each region.

Each consortium will need to achieve **4 prescribed broad outcomes**. Each outcome has a set of headings to respond to and demonstrate how they are being met. Greater detail about these can be found in appendices 1-4.

In addition, there will be further issues for discussion and development during 2007-08. During the year Capacitybuilders will research and lead informed debate on the pros and cons of a number of ChangeUp operational issues that have developed differently in the nine regions, with a view to establishing agreed arrangements for these from April 2008:

The following is not an exhaustive list, but will include:

- Function and operation of Fund Management arrangements
- Function and operation of Programme Support
- Role of accountable body – function and operation
- Consistent approach to monitoring returns
- Guidelines for Project evaluation
- Addressing equality and diversity – mainstreaming and targeted

Regional Allocation

The national amount available for the CDF is £7million for the financial year 2007-08. Funds will be allocated to regions using the current ChangeUp formula. (This will be reviewed during 2007/08).

REGION	Allocation
East of England	£672,700
East Midlands	£658,700
London	£903,700
North East	£623,700
North West	£1,029,700
South East	£714,700
South West	£763,700
West Midlands	£812,700
Yorkshire & Humber	£820,400
Totals	£7,000,000

TIMETABLE	
7 th December 2006	Consortium Development Fund announced
January / February 2007	Regional meetings to agree consortia allocations, facilitated by Regional Co-ordinators
Mid March 2007	Consortia agree to Capacitybuilders outline proposal and methodology for achieving outcomes
March 2007	Letters of Intent sent to consortia lead / accountable bodies for signing
1 st April 2007	1 st quarter grant issued
Mid June 2007	Consortia to have undertaken "baseline" assessment using Capacitybuilders' model [to inform CDF workplan below] Consortia to submit detailed CDF workplans with timetables, activity, milestones and budgets.
Mid July 2007	Letters of Confirmation to be signed and returned to Capacitybuilders

Statement on Letter of Intent, Terms of Grant and Monitoring

A Letter of Intent will be issued to Consortia Lead / Accountable Bodies in March. This will simply state that you agree to undertake work to achieve the desired outcomes described previously and will use the agreed amount of money available to your consortium for that purpose. The letter will also contain a commitment to drawing up a workplan by mid June for 2007-8 with timetable, activity to achieve the outcomes and budget.

The letter will be accompanied by revised Terms of Grant and information about updated monitoring / evaluation arrangements. To date, we have used the previous Home Office models with minor amendments but are in the process of drawing up our own. Signing the Letter of Intent will indicate your acceptance of the new terms and monitoring / evaluation arrangements.

CONSORTIUM DEVELOPMENT

Appendix 1

A fundamental requirement will be an assessment of the whether the Consortium is fit for purpose. Consortia will use an updated and extended version of the 'Progression Through Partnership Diagnostic Toolkit' with some level of external facilitation for assessment

Consortia should be based on geographical coverage [sub-regional / county and regional] and not function or service. Specialist or thematic infrastructure organisations should be members of the most appropriate geographical consortium. It is a requirement that consortia demonstrate that they are receptive and addressing these issues. This is in line with Capacitybuilders aspiration to bring equality and diversity into the mainstream. Capacitybuilders will ensure that organisations working with marginalised or socially excluded communities continue to receive support.

The assessment should include [in no order of priority and all to be addressed]

- **Team Development and internal relationships**
 - Strong and effective team
 - Clear and shared understanding of consortium vision / purpose and members collective and individual roles
 - Transparent and effective decision-making
 - Balance between involvement and leadership
- **User Engagement**
 - Commitment to participative approach
 - Equality & diversity - real involvement of communities of interest
 - Range of engagement methods with front-line organisations
 - Accountability to frontline organisations, partners and funders
- **Partnership development within the consortium**
 - Rules [terms of reference, constitution or similar] with set headings
 - Policy statements [membership, inclusivity, equalities, communication, purpose]
 - Membership - all appropriate organisations as members, regularly reviewed
 - Mix of specialist and generic infrastructure organisations [3rd sector, not only VCS]
 - Effective administration and secretariat function
 - Effective fund management [role of fund managers or accountable bodies, full cost recovery]
- **Links between sectors and external relationships**
 - Public sector agencies' understanding of third sector
 - Robustness of structures for public sector consultation / engagement
 - Funding relationships recognise need for stability and forward planning
 - Recognition and resourcing of infrastructure
- **Performance management**
 - Procedures for review of plans
 - Equality proofing
 - Clear procedures for monitoring delivery against plans and stated outputs / outcomes
 - Clear procedures for evaluation, dissemination of findings and feeding back into future planning
- **Equality and diversity**
 - planning: to promote inclusion and equality – setting objectives and targets
 - decision making: allocating budgets, time, and facilities for a stronger focus on equalities
 - design: shaping services to address needs not met by mainstream services (
 - access: improving access where necessary services are not being taken up by some communities
- **Communication**
 - Communication plan or statement
 - Effective collection and dissemination of information, data, opportunities and good practice

REGIONWIDE CONSORTIA COLLABORATION

Appendix 2

Capacitybuilders has put forward a simple or basic model which allows for some flexibility [see next page]. It should accommodate structures which already exist and provide the role and functions that we believe are important for the third sector to be influential in local and regional progress and regeneration.

Capacitybuilders intends to refine and adapt this model after discussion with consortia to ensure that minimum requirements can be met and that good features of existing local structures can be retained. Wherever possible Capacitybuilders require that specialist or thematic infrastructure organisations are members of the most appropriate geographical consortium. This is in line with Capacitybuilders aspiration to bring equality and diversity into the mainstream.

At one end are local consortia, taking account of and planning for the needs of front line organisations. These may be based on sub regions, counties or sometimes district / unitary authorities. Alongside these is a regional consortium whose members are infrastructure organisations and networks which deliver project activity across the region. The members of these consortia should also work strategically – building an accurate profile of their area and building relationships with appropriate agencies.

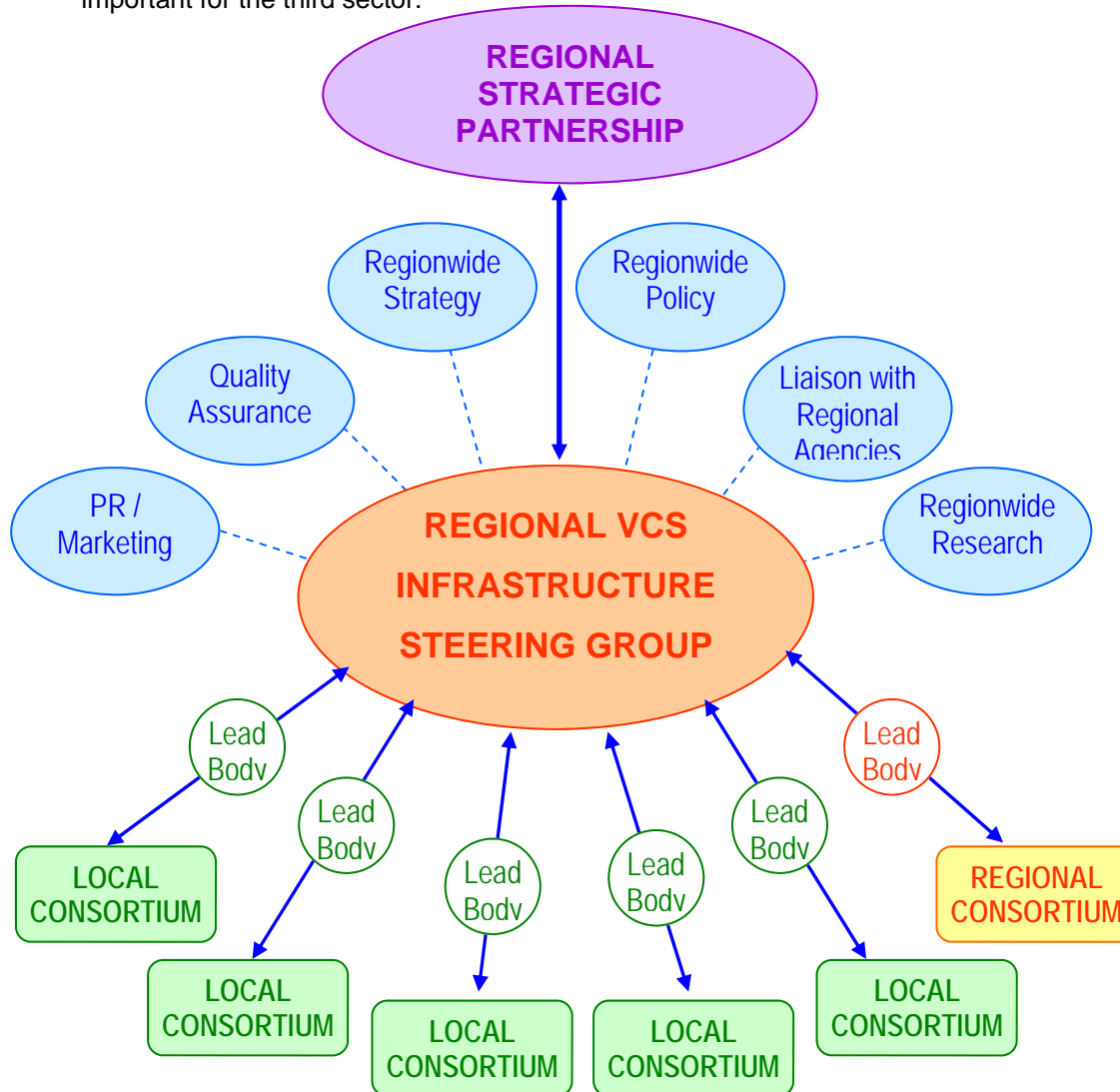
Capacitybuilders wants to develop the strategic role across each region. It is proposed that a proportion of the regional CDF allocation is used to establish new or support existing “Regionwide Third Sector Infrastructure Steering Groups”. This group provides a link between the local consortia. Representatives from the regional consortium and local consortia—usually the lead bodies - will typically form the membership. The Steering Group must also include regional ‘equality’ representatives where they exist or work towards establishing appropriate bodies. The role is to facilitate a strategic approach, by sharing information, linking VCS strategies and plans, liaising with regional agencies.

At the other end is a strategic partnership, which is not focusing on ChangeUp but using ChangeUp funds [and other resources] to be influential with public sector partners. This will be the opportunity for the third sector and public agencies to meet together for mature debate and strategic dialogue. It will reflect the benefits, contribution and aspirations of the sector. In this group, the role of third sector representatives is to contribute to the ‘bigger picture’, be outward looking and champion the role of the sector in achieving regional progress. Initially, Capacitybuilders may facilitate the establishment of this group, where a similar partnership does not already exist

Effectively supported representation within an appropriately resourced structure should

- Understand and take account of the social and political context and structures
- Develop improved intelligence about the third sector role and impact.
- Understand and influence the sector’s role in engaging with the public policy agenda; and sector links to local government;
- Ensure that regional plans are integral to other regional strategies
- Ensure that this strategic approach is reflected at all levels and in all agencies in the region;

N.B. The terms below may not mean the same thing in some regions. Similarly, the functions of some groupings below may be combined into a single body in some regions e.g. Regional Consortium and Region Strategic Partnership. The role and membership [see right] are more important than the name. We want to support structures which already exist and provide the role and functions that we believe are important for the third sector.



Regionwide Strategic Partnership

Membership: Representatives from VCS [Regional VCS Infrastructure Steering Group] meet with representatives from key regional agencies [RDA, Regional Assembly, Regional Local Government, Government Office, Learning & Skills Council, Funders].

Role: VCS strategic engagement and involvement in regional planning, policy development and implementation and service delivery. Looking 'outwards' - not focusing on ChangeUp or funding.

Regionwide VCS Infrastructure Steering Group

Membership: Representatives from regional consortium and local consortia—usually the lead bodies. Must also include regional 'equality' reps where they exist or work towards establishing appropriate body.

Role: Facilitating a strategic approach, by sharing information, linking VCS strategies and plans to analyse needs, liaising with regional agencies.

Lead Body

The organisation which represents a consortium—not to be confused with the 'accountable body' when the latter is different and may not be a consortium member.

Regional Consortium

Membership: regionwide generic, specialist, and thematic infrastructure organisations—to include regionwide equality networks [inc BME & Faith]. May include appropriate public sector agencies.

Role: Agree plan and priorities for regionwide infrastructure services, allocate resources and feed into strategic regional structures.

Local Consortia [District, County or sub regional]

Membership: local generic, specialist, and thematic infrastructure organisations—to include local equality networks [inc BME & Faith]. May include local public sector agencies.

Role: Agree plan and priorities for local infrastructure services, allocate resources and feed into strategic regional structures.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2008-14 Appendix 3

The consortium should undertake work to develop and agree a long term Infrastructure Strategy.

The format is to be developed with some partners and stakeholders between February and April 2007. A number of models exist which could be considered and adapted. Capacitybuilders will decide on the format following discussions and drawing on existing expertise and resource materials.

The Consortium will

- Draw from information in and supporting the Infrastructure Investment Plan
- Review information in the IIP – are there new reports, policies, opportunities or constraints and do priorities need updating
- Set out the nature of infrastructure support to be available in 2014
- Outline how the consortium intends to achieve that in incremental steps
- Involve key stakeholders in developing the strategy – including frontline organisations, local authorities, Primary Care Trusts / Health Authorities, Local Strategic partnerships
- Map the strategy against the strategies, plans and current work of those key stakeholders
- Seek endorsement of the final version by key stakeholders as partners
- Take ownership of the process and strategy – through participation and consensus

DRAFT FORMAT – Extract from Performance Hub website

Stage 1: Agreeing the direction

Stage 2: Getting informed

Stage 3: Options and choice

There are a wide range of tools that can help you at these different stages

The plan

A good strategic plan is short and to-the-point and is a tool that communicates the strategy well to others. A long or dense document is less likely to be used and the key strategic headlines are more likely to be lost.

The plan will usually include

- a statement of the organisation's vision and mission
- the key changes it aims to make in the world over the next few years [6]
- brief reasons why these aims are the right ones
- the main implications of this strategy for the organisation (its finances, staff, volunteers, geography, skills and knowledge, etc.)
- the roles of key people in delivering the strategy
- timescales and a process for reviewing the strategy

INFRASTRUCTURE ACTION/BUSINESS PLAN 2008-11 Appendix 4

The consortium should undertake work to develop and agree a shorter term Infrastructure Action Plan.

As with the Strategy, Capacitybuilders will develop the format with partners and stakeholders between February and April 2007. A number of models exist which could be considered and adapted. Capacitybuilders will decide on the format following discussions and drawing on existing expertise and resource materials.

The Consortium will

- Draw from information in and supporting the IIP and Strategy
- Outline actions in the first stage of achieving the headline outcomes in the Strategy
- Involve key stakeholders in developing the plan – including frontline organisations, local authorities, Primary Care Trusts / Health Authorities, Local Strategic partnerships
- Map the action plan against the strategies, plans and current work of those key stakeholders
- Seek endorsement of the final version by key stakeholders as partners
- Take ownership of the process and plan – through participation and consensus

DRAFT FORMAT

This example is an adaptation of the Community Fund model for a business plan

An action plan should explain:

- why projects are needed / prioritised [from IIP];
- how the projects will work (the project inputs);
- how the projects will be managed; [which organisations, who leads, how selected]
- what the beneficiaries will gain (the project outcomes and the change it contributes to);
- how the outputs and outcomes of their projects will be measured;
- what the projects will cost
- why those particular organisations should do the project.

An action plan is likely to include:

- a one-page summary;
- the consortiums aims and objectives and how the projects fits into these;
- a description of the projects to be delivered;
- an analysis of the need, [from IIP];
- a survey of similar or related services or projects provided by other organisations;
- the outcomes and long term change the project intends to bring about;
- targets for what will be achieved within a set timetable;
- details of how the organisations will monitor the outputs and outcomes;
- a consortium structure;
- a budget and cash flow forecast for each year;
- a fund-raising plan with important dates;
- a marketing plan with important dates;
- a summary of the consortium's track record of delivering similar projects;
- staff requirements, including the skills of main people involved in the projects;