



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: Plymouth City Council

Name of CCIN Lead Member: Councillor Chris Penberthy

Name and Job Title: Darin Halifax (Senior Policy Advisor)

1. What is your idea?

We would like to promote the Cities of Service model for social action to our colleagues and friends in the network. Cities of Service is effectively about people helping people. Cities of Service takes the strategic overview and leadership role of local government and combines it with the skills, knowledge and energy of citizens to address the most pressing challenges in a given geographical area. The model is based on four defining characteristics – leadership, clear objectives, purposeful action and impact. It has helped to elevate the significance and status of

volunteering in both Plymouth and Bristol and has prompted us to think about the role of social action in designing services and in complementing and enhancing core public service provision. Over 10,000 people so far have shown us that they want to make a difference in the place where they live by getting involved in Cities of Service projects and we want to scale this work up even further to work with even more citizens across the network to tackle the key issues in each local authority area. For both Plymouth and Bristol, we are addressing our most difficult challenges by working with our greatest asset – our citizens.

2. Who will you work with?

Plymouth and Bristol are both Cities of Service and CCIN members. We will aim to work with all CCIN members to see if the model would work in their area and we have a compelling story to tell. In 2014 in Plymouth, we developed Grow Share Cook as a way to address food poverty. 4 years later. It has delivered over 40,000 free meals to over 2,750 individuals. Included in this is a free fortnightly supply of free fruit and vegetables to over 200 of our most disadvantaged households for a year as well as a weekly supply to the city's foodbank and soup runs. Our 158 Grow Share Cook volunteers have also completed almost 100 cooking sessions to a total of 350 individuals enabling them to cook the healthy produce arriving on their doorstep. In Bristol, they have concentrated on reading attainment for young people. Over 250 volunteers have assisted almost 500 children to improve their reading 'age' by six months after a 10 week 'block' of volunteer-led reading. Both projects work on the same methodology – strategic leadership, a key priority and a direct ask of residents – both projects show that it works.

3. What are the outcomes you hope to achieve?

Cities of Service has been the volunteering model that brings public services and citizens together to address the big stuff that really matters. It is a clear call for action to develop a new relationship between state and resident. It simplifies the complicated issue that a place has to deal with by asking what you/we can do together to make this easier for both of us. It is a deliberate move away from the transactional model of public services and allows local authorities to make the most of the time, energy and skills of residents. It has created the opportunity to work with rather than just deliver to communities.

Both Bristol and Plymouth operate a theory of change model which leads us to an ultimate outcome. In Plymouth, more people have access to healthy food and in Bristol, more young people reach their appropriate reading age. For both cities, metrics have been developed with government departments, council staff and volunteers to enable us to reach the ultimate outcome. Again, we would like to develop this model of metric development with other interested CCIN members.

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

Working with our citizens in true partnership is the only sustainable solution to public sector challenges. By sharing our resources, thinking and assets, we can make a difference to the very issues we have not been able to in the past. Cities of Service is a reflection of modern local government. It enables local authorities to be less paternalistic and much more facilitators and

directors of asset based/placed based social action. We believe this model is transportable across all local authorities and there are another 300 cities across the world who believe the same.

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

- Self-help – residents find their own solutions to a place's biggest issues
- Self-responsibility – residents own the issue but are surrounded by support from the local authority
- Democracy – shared thinking and action with the people who know their place the best
- Equality, equity and solidarity – everyone has part to play and something to offer. Everyone has an equal say in deciding the issue they want to address and how to achieve the ultimate goal
- Honesty and openness – Cities of Service is true democracy in action. It enables local authorities to ask its residents for assistance and it enables those residents to be part of the solution.
- Social responsibility – Cities of Service promotes the idea that everyone has something to offer no matter how small. It creates a "team" around a problem and shares the load between the public sector and residents.
- Caring for others – All of the projects across all of the Cities of Service have people at the heart of the issue. It addresses those very issues that matter most to people.

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

- We would like to hold a Cities of Service/CCIN workshop in the U.K led by the 4 U.K cities that are Cities of Service (2 of which are CCIN members). We would also involve a small number of the U.S cities that have delivered this model of social action since 2012 to learn from their experience and find out why and how it works for them.
 - We would release a series of case studies/blueprints on how to deliver a Cities of Service project based on theme e.g. loneliness, food poverty, reading attainment etc.
 - We would establish a Cities of Service network within CCIN.
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