



# Co-operative Councils

## Innovation Network

### CCIN innovation funding – 2021/2 Policy Labs

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#### Expression of Interest – Policy Lab CCIN Funding 2021

**CCIN Member Organisation submitting application:** Co-operative College

**Name of CCIN Lead Councillor/Officer:** Cilla Ross

**Partner organisations:** 1. Greater Manchester Combined Authority. 2. The Development Co-operative. 3. Polesworth PC. 4. Plymouth Council.

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#### 1. What is your idea?

*Provide details of what your proposed project is, the story of how you identified the need or opportunity for the proposal and how the money will be spent.*

The Co-operative College has successfully delivered a two part induction programme for councillors and officers who represent Full Member Councils, Associate Members, Affiliate Members and Supporters of CCIN. These materials, which introduce CCIN, collate existing CCIN outputs and explore key themes for co-operative councils [are freely accessible](#). The induction materials are framed by the International Co-operative Alliance's (ICA) Values and Principles and Statement of Identity, but also those [Principles developed by CCIN](#) which link to the ICA's V and P but which additionally reflect the diverse contexts of Co-operative Councils.

Following the launch of the induction, the growth of the CCIN family, ongoing devolution and the distinctive experiences of 2020, not only has the co-operative case become ever more compelling, but new issues have emerged through discussion, networking and feedback. These issues continue to relate to how CCIN members can effectively use Values and Principles in their practice as a Council – not only within their own organisations but with communities, in political opposition and to create a sustainable culture of co-operation. Fundamental to this thinking and learning is how the co-operative economy can be built more broadly and sustainably.

Our proposal is for an accredited online training programme (taking a [micro credentials approach](#)) that is suitable for all CCIN Members but which picks up, in flexible ways, the knowledge and insight requirements of Associate members including those in opposition. One ambition is for CCIN members to be 'put through the programme' by CCIN. The distinctiveness of the offer lies in it being relevant and available to the broad LGA family from Parish Councils to Combined Authorities. In addition to repurposing existing Values and Principles content, other materials will be co-produced with CCIN stakeholders for the learning offer. We will also ensure that we don't reinvent the wheel by drawing on work previously developed in earlier co-operative capacity building Policy Labs such as [From Co-operative Councils to Co-operative Places](#).

## 2. Who will you work with?

We are eager to develop a co-producing working group for this project with a range of 'representative' CCIN views, contexts and perspectives from each category of membership and from members to officers. This is to ensure that the programme is relevant, fit for purpose and has the widest possible identity reach.

- The full member partners are: Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Plymouth Council
- Affiliate member: Development Coop
- Associate member: Polesworth PC

We will work closely with Polesworth PC who are also submitting a **Policy Prototype CCIN Funding Bid** with Burntwood Town Council, Peterborough Labour Group, North Warwickshire Labour Group, and Staffordshire Labour Group.

We believe that our initiative helps to support CCINs commitment to the principle of [Walking the talk](#) in relationship to member organisation.

## 3. What are the outcomes you hope to achieve?

*What are the outcomes you hope to achieve through this project and how will you know if your outcomes are achieved? What is your measure of success?*

The outcomes we hope to achieve are two-fold. First will be the availability of a suite of affordable and distinctive accredited micro-credentials which will enhance the knowledge and practice of CCIN members in relation to the practical application of values and principles in multiple contexts. Accreditation will be through the Co-operative College and will offer a range of flexible accreditation options from the Open Badge Factory to the Open College Network. Second however is that this initiative will enhance CCIN peer 'identity building' which will help to support and network all CCIN members and enable them to become more confident and active around co-operative themes and practices.

Our measures of success will include the numbers of CCIN members/participants engaging in the programme and achieving accreditation; a successful evaluation of how participation has enhanced their knowledge and sense of CCIN collective membership; and whether participants have continued their network engagement post learning. Feedback forms will be used and the web based content will be reviewed and kept updated to enhance sustainability.

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

*The CCIN aims to frame the debate on the future of sustainable solutions to public sector challenges. Our work will ultimately improve outcomes for communities by enabling members to develop radical innovation in policy and practice, sharing best practice and learning, and enabling innovators to chart new territory together. Please provide details of how your project will support this aim.*

The aim of this initiative is not only to support and develop the capabilities of CCIN members in relation to their co-workers and organisations, but also in relation to the communities they serve. That is why content will not only include high level learning on Values and Principles but also contribute to further enhancing an understanding of co-operative behaviours, culture, enterprise, governance, and performance. Our proposal embodies key CCIN principles. (see below). For example in order for CCIN members to meet the principle of 4. Enterprise and the Social Economy or 6. Community Leadership and a New Role for Councillors, the learning programme will help to encourage values based thinking around community approaches to economic development, co-production, and ways to ensure environments are developed in which co-operatives can thrive.

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

*Our Network is based on the Co-operative values developed by the International Co-operative Alliance: "self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity... honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others". Further details about the CCIN's Values and Principles is available [here](#). Please provide details of how your project will demonstrate the CCIN's Values and Principles.*

This initiative is deeply rooted in Values and Principles (learning about them and applying them in practice). As is implied in Section 4 above, the programme will, in its form and its content, prioritise knowledge acquisition and production which is informed by and further generates CCIN principles and practice through democratic engagement. It will help to build the co-operative economy.

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

*How will you share your learning with other CCIN members? How will you share your learning beyond the project? This could be through producing a report, holding a workshop or presenting at the CCIN's annual showcase event.*

We will share Policy Lab learning with the rest of the CCIN membership primarily through the learning materials and modules produced. The programme will be available as a member benefit and contribute towards continuing professional development as well as CCIN co-operative culture. By building on a range of previous outputs and engaging diverse interests we believe that we will have maximum impact and thus share the learning widely. A light touch steering group will discuss ways to further disseminate the learning. Additionally we will conduct a taster session / presentation at CCIN Conference and write a report for the CCIN Newsletter.