

Expression of Interest – Policy Prototype CCIN Funding 2021

CCIN Member Organisation submitting application: Preston City Council

Name of CCIN Lead Councillor/Officer: Rachel Stringfellow

Partner organisations: Fishwick Rangers Youth & Community Development Scheme and Preston United Youth Development Project

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1. What is your idea?

We will deliver the 'Unlock' project to provide young people with key life skills, including improved confidence and communication skills, through a targeted programme focused on physical fitness and on the achievement of wider personal goals, supported beyond the programme itself. The COVID19 lockdown has shown us that there are areas of deprivation throughout Preston and we are not currently reaching many of these areas. With the Unlock project we will work in partnership with Preston United Youth Development Project to deliver a sports based programme to increase activity levels for young people aged 12-18, once lockdown restrictions are lifted. We will target young people most adversely affected by the current crisis, offering structured football, dodgeball and gym sessions on Friday and Saturday nights. The young people we will target will be those from Preston's most deprived communities, including our BAME communities, and will include those who are disabled, offenders/or at risk of offending and who are out of school/at risk of exclusion.

The project will build on our experience over ten years in delivering structured activity programmes for young people at evening and weekend sessions and across school/college holidays. While the main focus of these sessions will be on physical fitness, we take a more holistic view of the benefits. Our experience tells us that physical fitness opens all sorts of doors and helps young people to make more positive contributions in education, work and socially. So at the start of the project, we will encourage participants to consider what they want to achieve through the programme, not just in terms of physical fitness, but also by addressing other issues of concern to them. We believe this will result in greater buy-in from the young people and better outcomes as a result of their participation.

2. Who will you work with?

We will recruit participants through local youth centres, clubs and secondary schools, as well as by developing our relationships within the Police Service, Community Action Group and other organisations and local community groups working with young people.

Fishwick Rangers Youth & Community Development Scheme and Preston United YDP practitioners have a lot of experience in dealing with hard-to-reach groups, and our creative learning techniques provide an effective alternative for individuals who have not been engaged by traditional learning opportunities.

3. What are the outcomes you hope to achieve?

The outcomes we hope to achieve with the young people are increased life skills, greater confidence and improved likelihood of employment and re-engagement in learning.

We will include in the project a robust exit strategy to support the delivery of these outcomes. At the end of the programme we will discuss with each participant how far they have progressed in achieving the goals they set at the outset, providing them with ideas and additional resources to support them after completing the programme. This will include signposting to other groups they can join, websites that will be of use/interest, and other materials to encourage continued participation in learning and achieving.

A 'graduation' event at the end of the course with families and friends will reinforce the young people's sense of achievement through their participation and encourage them to commit to developing this further after it finishes.

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

Preston has a wealth of local sports clubs and provision for young people which are run and coordinated separately. Through this project, we are committed to introducing greater coordination between providers, as well as community organisations and local services, so that we can work together to make sure that the offer available to young people in Preston reaches those who are most vulnerable, providing them with an opportunity to engage in sports activities in an environment that is familiar to them.

By establishing a co-operative approach, we aim to share best practice and learn from each other, supporting greater collaboration and effective working in the future to support our most vulnerable young people.

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

We will be working with local organisations and creating a new social partnership to maximise social value in a new model to meet priority needs. By working cooperatively within and across our city, as partner organisations we are working together to achieve outcomes which improve engagement and encourage learning. Through regular engagement and feedback, we will also provide young people a louder voice in designing services to meet their needs and priorities.

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

Fishwick Rangers Youth & Community Development Scheme and Preston United Youth Development Project have strong links with Preston City Council, including through the Preston

Youth Forum, which brings together the skills and experience of partners across the city to develop ways of engaging young people. These relationships provide local and national (via the Council's membership of CCIN) mechanisms for the project to disseminate learning and reach a wide community of partners with a shared commitment to young people. For example, the Forum has a subgroup that is dedicated to developing pathways to education and employment for young people leaving school which works with the colleges, the University of Central Lancashire, DWP and non-formal education providers like the Preston Vocational Centre and Preston North End. Learning from the project can therefore be shared widely with these local organisations via the subgroup, alerting them to ways in which they can work more effectively to reach out to young people at greatest disadvantage.

Regular updates provided by the project to the Network will report on progress and challenges. The case study at the end will highlight key learning about the effectiveness of the innovations developed so this can be shared across the wider Network.