Enabling Social Action

The Enabling Social Action (ESA) programme is a partnership between the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Universities of Sheffield and Hull.

The two year programme aims to support local authority commissioners to co-design, co-produce and co-deliver services with local people, service users, and civil society organisations, to embed social action in their routine working.

We are looking to work with 4 local authorities who are already planning how they can work in this way, to support them with the co-design process, embedding learning and evaluation. By doing this, we hope to build up good practice that can be shared across and between local authorities, as well as assessing the impact of commissioning in this way.

Part one: A brief guide to Enabling Social Action

**What is social action?**

Social action is about people coming together to help improve their lives and solve the problems that are important in their communities. It involves people giving their time and other resources for the common good. This can be in a range of forms, from volunteering and community owned services to simple neighbourly acts.

**What is ESA all about?**

The aims of the programme are to:

* Support commissioners to embed co-design, co-production, and outcomes focused design in the routine workings of local authorities
* Develop practical guidance on how to deliver in new ways involving co-design, co-production, and facilitate community-led initiatives
* Identifying and overcoming barriers to supporting co-production, co-delivery, and community led aspects of service provision
* Create an evidence base that makes the case for working with service users to develop community led service provision to be shared within and between local authorities

The programme will support commissioners through a range of activities:

* ESA partnerships with 6 local authorities to develop new ways of delivering services with communities.
* Champions who will share learning and insights and galvanise local networks through events.
* A peer network to enable commissioners, VCSE organisations and councillors to share information, learning and good practice across the country.
* 6 national events to bring together a growing peer network creating long term culture change in local authorities.

We are seeking 4 local authorities to join Stevenage and York for a second cohort of ESA partnerships.

**What’s available?**

ESA partnerships will be supported over a 12 month period from January 2019 -January 2020. The partnerships will help local authorities to :

* Understand and enhance co-production
* Examine the potential to grow and sustain the SA initiative.
* Help to design a suite of evidence to uncover the impact of the SA initiative.

All 6 ESA partnerships will be brought together to share learning and approaches and will be expected to feed back into wider network activities.

Up to £9000 is available in expenses to local authorities and their partners to support their engagement with the research team. Local authorities will be able to utilise the funds for expenditure that supports/facilitates engagement with the research process but cannot use the funding to cover the costs of the work being commissioned.  
  
Key expenses could include:

* Additional staff time required to engage in the partnership, for example, to facilitate data collection, attend partnership workshops, or apply measurement tools.
* Costs of hosting workshops with local communities.
* Costs for attending other ESA-related events where partners have been asked to speak about their activities.
* Costs for community groups to be involved with the project.

Part two: Things to be aware of before you start your application

**Who can apply?**

Applications are welcome from local authorities only but are expected to involve a range of local partners in the initiative. Importantly, the initiative must be supported by the local authority and either involve local partners in design and delivery or seek to do so.

The criteria for selection include:

* A desire to embrace social action in the local authority and a specific project to put forward.
* A commissioner supported and driven project with either an established network of local partners or a desire to build this partnership.
* Funding in place or targeted resources for the project.
* Evidence of existing engagement in the initiative so far.
* The project links to policy priorities within DCMS.
* A commitment to undertake this work and be ready to start work with the ESA programme from January 2019 -January 2020.

**EOI Process**

An online application form/EoI is available at https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/management/esap\_application. Applicants need to complete the form and submit it, via email, to [J.M.McNeill@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:J.M.McNeill@sheffield.ac.uk)

The deadline for submitting your EOI is **11.59pm on 12th October 2018.**

**EOI Questions**

The following guide provides an overview of the questions that applicants must respond to in submitting an application.

Eligibility Questions

SA Initiative Name:

Local Authority:

Local Authority lead for SA initiative:

Existing funding for SA initiative:

Key Partner organisations within SA initiative:

**Application Questions -**

1. **Please tell us a bit about the specific SA initiative and background:** What are the aims and objectives of the SA initiative? Is this a newly emerging initiative or has it been in development for some time? What role does co-production play in the shaping, design and delivery of the initiative?
2. **Who are some of the primary/potential partners involved in the project?** Who are the key actors within the initiative? What roles and responsibilities do they undertake? Which groups do you anticipate having a direct relationship with the research team?
3. **How does the SA project link to the council’s strategy for commissioning?** How does this fit into the broader context of commissioning within the Local Authority? Is there the likelihood of continued funding or other support for the project beyond the next 12 months?
4. **What are the aims of the project from January 2019 - January 2020 and the anticipated impacts?** The research team will only be directly involved for 12 months from January 2019, applicants need to be clear on what is going to be happening within this project during this period and how working with the ESA project will add value to this. We cannot consider any new projects that have no clear plan to begin activities by January 2019.
5. **Why would this be a good project for the ESA programme to work with?** The programme focuses on supporting commissioners to work with service users in a different way, to embed new ways of working across the local authority, and to share learning nationally with local authorities and their partners. How would your initiative have useful learning for other commissioners seeking to co-produce with service-users and communities? Is there something distinctive/innovative that you are trying to do that others could learn from? Are you tackling a common challenge but in a distinctive fashion?
6. **What benefits do you hope your project will gain from working with the research team?** You need to be clear both about what type of learning you are seeking in order to drive your initiative forward or to demonstrate its impact and why working with the research team might be the best way to achieve this? Is there a specific barrier/challenge/type of evidence that you feel you need support with? Again it is important to give consideration to what might be feasible within the timescale and the amount of input that your partners and the research team will be able to contribute.