



## Happiness Hubs Fund Guidance Notes

**We strongly recommend you read these notes fully before submitting your application.**

North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board launched the Happiness Hubs Fund, managed by Pioneering Care Partnership. The fund provides one-off grants to support local community providers to launch or extend current project opening hours which address/provide non-crisis mental health support, by providing spaces that can be accessed by local communities. This funding is part of the wider Community Mental Health Transformation Fund.

### **Who is providing this funding?**

This grant funding has been provided by North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board and that the Pioneering Care Partnership is managing this grant on their behalf.

### **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

Information stored about applications, panel decisions and project outcomes and reports will be stored by the Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP). PCP's IT systems are managed and monitored by SmartIT.

Data stored in relation to this fund and its applications will be shared with the commissioner, be North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board and Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat as part of the process of administrating and reviewing this grant.

This data will be retained.

### **What areas does funding cover?**

This funding covers the areas supported by Durham County Council and all projects must be delivered within these.

### **Targeted audience for support**

Projects should support positive outcomes for adults aged over 18 with Mental Health problems, enabling them to live a happier, healthier and safer life. Ideally, they provide volunteering opportunities.

### **How much can you apply for?**

Grants of between £500 - £7,500 are available, in this current round of funding the total value of grants of which will be awarded this year is approximately £128,000.

### **How can the funding be spent?**

Funding can be spent on revenue costs only. No capital costs will be considered.

**When can projects start?**

Your project start date should ideally not start for 2 months from the date of your application to allow time for the approval process. We will not fund projects retrospectively.

**Projects length and sustainability?**

We are looking for projects that we can fund for minimum of 12-18 months. The provider must be able sustain the project beyond the initial funding period and provide a plan on how they will do this as part of their application.

**Will I be required to report how funding was spent?**

Yes, we will require quarterly update reports on how the funding is being spent and what activities are taking place. At the end of the funding period a final evaluation report must be completed, evidencing the spend and impacts of the project.

**What are the Key Priorities?**

Projects should support physical and emotional wellbeing, and mental health through the provision of weekly activities that are open to anyone on an ongoing basis. They can be referral or drop in based.

Staff and volunteers providing these activities/groups/drop in session should have mental health training i.e. Mental Health First Aid Training (or should be completed within the first 3 months, support can be provided in accessing training from the Happiness Hubs Team). Staff/Volunteers should be able to support individuals using the service and refer individuals as required to other means of support externally. We are looking for projects that can create a safe space to talk about their mental wellbeing.

The grant should not be used for closed activities groups unless they are for a particularly vulnerable or hard to reach community group.

Projects should provide access to:

- A regular designated safe space
- General amenities/refreshments
- Social activity
- Information and advice, i.e., mental health, welfare etc.

A pop-up style project may be considered, if it targets a hard-to-reach community group.

**What types of activity will we fund?**

- Staffing
- Volunteering
- Training for staff and volunteers around mental health first aid, awareness etc.
- Room hire
- Refreshments (limited to £1.50 per head for beverages and snacks, up to £5 per head if including a substantial meal)
- Activity resources
- Small equipment

Please note that the panel will only consider transport costs in certain circumstances. Awards in this area are the exception not the rule and there needs to be a clear explanation as to why this is needed.

The grant can be used to fund new projects or be used to extend existing project delivery. If applying to extend a current project, please be clear about the current project format and how you will be extending this and why.

Successful projects will be provided with promotional branding to be used when promoting your service. Your project will be added to a list of Happiness Hubs that will be shared with Local Police, NHS services and Community Link Workers so that they can refer clients to your service. We will also add you to our newsletter list where we will provide updates. If you provide us with stories/case studies to promote your service please ensure that you have the permission of the users to share this with third parties.

### **Match funding?**

Projects should contain an element of match funding, ideally this would be between 40 – 50%. However, lower figures may be considered for smaller projects under £3,000.

### **Can I apply for more than one grant?**

Yes, however, any subsequent applications must be for a project that significantly differs to previous application. We will not refund previously funded projects.

### **When do I need to return my application?**

The closing date for applications for 2024/25 are:

- Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February at 4.00 pm

The panel will meet to consider these applications by the end September 2024. If funding is still available after this date another closing date for further applications will be announced.

### **Who can apply?**

- Any not for profit and voluntary organisation operating within County Durham.
- Faith based groups who operate activities which are not purely for religious benefit.
- Statutory organisations who can demonstrate that the project enhances their statutory obligations and doesn't duplicate statutory funding (e.g. schools must be able to demonstrate non-statutory funded extra-curricular benefits, along with a wider community benefit).

### **What support is available to help me with my application?**

You can contact Jane Cunningham on 07715 204462 or [Happiness.Hubs@pcp.uk.net](mailto:Happiness.Hubs@pcp.uk.net)

### **What's the Process?**

- If you have an idea, we would encourage you to contact us, we will support you through the process and expected project outcomes. Occasionally we may approach local organisations/groups directly, where local health data indicates a need to provide non-crisis mental health support in a particular community.
- You submit an application and we will acknowledge its receipt.
- Your application will be reviewed to check eligibility and ensure nothing is missing – we may contact you if we need clarify any details.

- Your application will then be scored by a panel, who will agree which projects to fund.
- The expected turnaround time is 2 months. If we are unable to meet the indicated timeframes above you will be contacted.
- If the panels have any questions about your application you will be contacted for clarification, the panel may want to meet you to find out more about the project.
- You'll be kept updated on the progress of your application at each stage of the process.

### **How will the panel score my application?**

When completing your application please ensure you are clear about:

- The number of people you plan to support.
- The outcomes of the support provided.
- Whom you are planning to support.
- What activities the project is going to deliver and how you are going to do it.
- How you hope these activities will support the community.
- Who are the people involved in delivering the project, what support they will provide and any relevant training or experience.
- What you hope to achieve longer-term for these clients.
- We will be considering whether your plans are realistic, deliverable and proportionate.
- The costing of your project and its sustainability.
- We will also be looking at how this project relates to supporting mental health and wellbeing of the local community

The panel will look at 5 areas when scoring your application:

1. Project outline
2. Evidence of need
3. Costings
4. Sustainability
5. Overall fit with the fund guidelines

Each area is scored between 1 to 5. The minimum pass mark for funding is 15, or 50% of the possible total score. If your application does not meet this minimum requirement, you can resubmit the application in the next available round of funding for further consideration once redrafted. If your application has not been redrafted it will not be reconsidered.

Please note that achieving a score of 15 or 50% of the total score does not guarantee your funding. If a funding round is oversubscribed, then only those projects with the highest mark will be awarded a grant.

Please see the following pages for a fuller explanation of how projects are scored.

### 1. Project Outline

| <b>Scoring Criteria</b>  |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>   | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| Does not fully explain the project activities and fails to make the connection to mental wellbeing | Gives a brief overview of the project and does not fully link to how its supports mental wellbeing | Gives details of the project activities, who it will support and demonstrates how the project will support mental wellbeing. | Gives a good overview of the project activities, support provided and by whom and links well to mental wellbeing and how this project will support. | Detailed overview of activities, and how they will support the community wellbeing longer-term. Information was provided on who is supporting and their relevant experience and how the project links to external partners. |

### 2. Evidence of Need

| <b>Scoring Criteria</b>   |   |  |  |   |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| Does not fully explain the need for the project and makes no link to mental health. | Gives a brief overview of the need for the project but doesn't provide any supporting facts or evidence to back the statements. Or is weak in linking the project to mental health. | Gives a brief overview of the need for the project and provides limited facts or evidence to support statements. Link made to mental health. | Gives a good overview of the need for the project. Provides clear facts or evidence from more than one source to support statements. Link made to mental health. | Excellent overview of the need for the project. Provides facts or evidence from multiple sources to support statements, including own local research within the community about what they want and how this project meets that. Explanation is fully linked to mental health. |

### 3. Project Costs

| <b>Scoring Criteria</b>  |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>   | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| No match funding. Does not fully explain how the money will be spent. Costs are considered excessive or unrealistic and do not fit the fund. | Limited explanation about how the spent. Brief explanation about the situation regarding match funding. Costs are considered excessive or unrealistic and do not fit the fund. | An adequate explanation regarding match funding has been provide. Some detail has been provided as to how the fund will be spent. Costs are considered ok and not unrealistic and generally fit with the fund. | Gives a clear explanation regarding match funding. Has broken down most of the costs by providing details. Costs are considered ok and not unrealistic and contain a fit with the fund, i.e. the panel did not remove anything. | Full match funding explanation, including what has been secured, how long for, or what has been applied for and when the outcome is expected and how long that funding will last. Has fully broken down all the costs by providing concise details. Costs are fully realistic and fit with the fund. Nothing is removed by the panel. Clear consideration has been given when costing the project to its sustainability |

#### 4. Sustainability

| <b>Scoring Criteria</b>   |  |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>2</b>   | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| No explanation about how the project will be sustained beyond the Happiness Hub grant period. | Vague generalisations about how the project will be sustained beyond the Happiness Hub grant period. | Some explanation about how the project will be sustained. However, there is limited detail about how that will be achieved. | Gives a clear explanation of how the project will be sustained. With some detail about how that will be achieved. There is evidence that there is a plan in place | Gives a full explanation of how the project will be sustained and there is a clear plan that shows what actions will be taken to achieve this. The plan gives consideration to the largest costs for running the project beyond the Happiness Hub grant period. |

#### 5. Overall Fit

| <b>Scoring Criteria</b>                 |                                    |   |  |  |
|---|------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>1</b>                                | <b>2</b>                           | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>   | <b>5</b>   |
| Does not fit with the grant guidelines. | Vaguely fits with grant guidelines | Fits with the grant guidelines but the project is not fully explained. There are gaps within the application, as the details to address criteria 1 to 4 of the scoring process is limited (scoring no higher than 3). | There is a clear link between the project and the grant guidelines. The project is clearly explained. There are gaps within the application, as the details to address criteria 1 to 4 of the scoring process are mixed. | The project is fully explained and linked to the grant guidelines. The project is clearly explained and there are no gaps within the application, as the details fully address criteria 1 to 4 of the scoring process. |

**Panel members will be asked to identify and declare any interests linked to applications to ensure impartiality.**

### **Returning Your Application Form**

Safe Haven Development Officer, Pioneering Care Partnership, Carers Way, Newton Aycliffe, DL5 4SF

Or

[Happiness.Hubs@pcp.uk.net](mailto:Happiness.Hubs@pcp.uk.net)

### **What cannot be funded?**

- Retrospective projects.  
A grant will not be awarded for work or activities that have started or been completed. It cannot be used to pay for goods or services that have already been ordered or paid for (including deposits), before an offer letter is sent.
- Repeat projects.  
Please ensure your projects are sustainable, we will not refund projects.
- Requests for project that include running costs for more than 18 months.
- Projects that do not start within 6 months of the date of the grant offer letter.
- Projects that will lead to future operating cost difficulties for the recipient organisation.
- Profit-making organisations or individuals.
- Religious projects, although faith-based organisations can be supported where there is wider community benefit.
- Political activities.
- Purchase of restricted goods, including alcohol and fireworks.
- Overseas travel/projects that take place outside of the UK.
- Projects that should be paid from mainstream budgets of the Authority or of an external agency unless it can be demonstrated that the project will provide 'additionality'.
- Mainstream educational activity i.e. activities/services that schools have a statutory responsibility to provide.
- Events
- Projects where the applicant has not managed a previous grant satisfactorily.
- You must not include any VAT that you can claim back from HM Revenue and Customs.
- Loans and interest payments.
- Liability arising out of negligence.
- Payments to employees of the organisation arising from claims of unfair dismissal or redundancy.
- Used vehicles.

### **General Funding Application Hints & Tips**

- All forms must be typewritten (Handwritten application will not be accepted).
- Choose a name for your project that is self-explanatory.
- Always keep your project plan in mind. Don't get carried away and commit yourself to a project you won't be able to deliver.
- Be specific about what you plan to do.

- Write in plain English. Use short sentences and avoid acronyms and jargon. You are describing your work to someone who may have never met you or seen what your organisation does. There is a maximum word-count so be succinct and use simple language.
- Review the priorities and specific impact criteria. Make sure that your project description clearly demonstrates how your project will meet these.
- Include all the information requested in the application. Missing information could mean your application is rejected automatically.
- Make your budget as specific as possible. Get quotes where needed so your budget is accurate and give a full breakdown of costs as far as possible. If you are buying resources tell us what they are.
- Your project may be fantastic however, if it is not submitted on time it will not be considered, please ensure your application arrives on time.

Best of luck, we look forward to receiving your application.