



Cities of Service UK – Mobilising Volunteers to Achieve Impact

SUMMARY

- 1.1 Cities of Service UK is a new initiative that will support cities to develop and implement innovative approaches to mobilising volunteers to impact on pressing local challenges. The initiative has been inspired by the US Cities of Service movement, which was launched in 2009 in New York by Mayor Bloomberg and has since spread to 180 cities across the United States.
- 1.2 Nesta are working with Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Cabinet Office to adapt the Cities of Service model for the UK context. Their approach has been shaped by the comments and insights that local authorities shared with them at an event with Mayor Bloomberg at a Nesta conference in September attended by the Head of Policy, Research and Engagement.
- 1.3 Nesta are seeking to identify four Partner Cities and six Associate Cities to work with and will provide funding to support their work.
- 1.4 This report sets out details of the scheme and seeks Leadership's guidance on whether the Council should apply to the scheme either as a Partner or an Associate City.
- 1.5 The deadline for applications is 22 November 2013.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Review the details of the scheme as outlined in the report and consider whether the Council should apply to the scheme as a Partner City.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Cities of Service UK is an opportunity for the Council to secure funding to support work with volunteers.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 Nesta are looking to identify local authorities that will be in the first wave of what they hope will become a thriving UK chapter of the global Cities of Service movement.
- 4.2 Experience from the US suggests that the most important drivers of success for Cities of Service are senior leadership and a focus on key strategic challenges with an ability to measure and document outcomes. Local authorities have different capabilities and levels of readiness and Nesta are therefore inviting applications at two levels:
- **Partner Cities** will receive funding and practical support to appoint a Chief Service Officer (CSO) who will develop and deliver initiatives that mobilise volunteers to impact on two specific local challenges in line with a published Service Plan. Chief Service Officers must report directly to the Chief Executive, Mayor or Leader of the Council and this must be their full time role (any previous roles must be backfilled).
 - **Associate Cities** will receive funding to develop and deliver initiatives that mobilise volunteers to impact on one specific local challenge. These cities will produce a brief Service Statement outlining what they are doing, rationale for the approach and expected outcomes which should be publicly available.
- 4.3 Nesta anticipate working with up to four **Partner Cities** and up to six **Associate Cities** in the first wave, and hope to bring on additional waves in due course.
- 4.4 **Partner Cities – the offer...**
- Up to £150K (over two years) to contribute to the salary and expenses of the Chief Service Officer.
 - Up to £30K of seed funding to help develop service initiatives.
 - A programme of training and learning events that bring Partner Cities together to develop their skills in key areas like needs assessment, impact evaluation and communications.
 - A serving Chief Service Officer from the US who will provide mentoring support.
 - Technical support and tools, including access to a volunteering platform and measurement tools.

4.5 **Partner cities – what the Council has to provide...**

- A commitment to appoint a dedicated Chief Service Officer at a suitably senior level and with a direct reporting line to the Chief Executive, Mayor or Leader of the Council.
- Focus on impact and metrics. We will need to identify two local challenges that we want to address by mobilising volunteers and develop clear metrics that demonstrate our service initiatives are having an impact.
- Publication of a City Service Plan by end of March 2014.
- Develop a funding plan for your service initiatives, drawing on existing budgets, grant funding and other sources.
- Be open to sharing information, data and learning across the programme and externally.
- Use the Cities of Service UK branding in our communications, including calling our initiative “Team Derby”.
- Engage in the training and learning programme throughout the two year period of the funding, including face to face events and conference calls.

4.6 Partner Cities will need to submit the following by 22 November 2013:

- One side of A4 detailing why we are interested in participating.
- A job description for our Chief Service Officer including reporting lines, where the Chief Service Officer will be located, any staff or teams that will support them and details of your recruitment strategy.
- Details of who will be the figurehead or ambassador for the programme in the city – this could be an internal leadership figure (e.g. Mayor) or a notable person in the community who can support and advocate for our Team.
- A draft of our Service Plan setting out:
 - The two local challenges that we want to address by mobilising volunteers and details of how you have arrived at those priorities.
 - The specific metrics that we will use to measure impact against those challenges, including what data you will use and how it will be collected.
 - Proposals for up to four service initiatives that we plan to implement to address these local challenges. These can be well developed (including ideas from the blueprints set out below) or early stage ideas. We need to set out how they will address the local challenges we have identified and outline our implementation plans.
- A short statement of how we will engage with internal and external stakeholders to develop and deliver our Service Plan, priorities and initiatives. This should include elected members, Council and other local services, charities and community groups, businesses and others
- A draft budget covering two years for the Chief Service Officer and Service Plan. This should include details of matched funding from existing resources from the Council or local partners, as well as assumptions about grant and other funding.

4.7 **Associate Cities – the offer...**

- Up to £30K of seed funding to help develop service initiatives.
- Participation in the programme of training and learning events alongside Partner Cities to develop skills in key areas like needs assessment, impact evaluation and communications.
- Technical support and tools, including access to a volunteering platform and measurement tools.

4.8 **Associate Cities – what the Council has to provide...**

- Focus on impact and metrics. We will need to identify one local challenge that we want to address by mobilising volunteers and develop clear metrics that demonstrate your service initiatives are having an impact.
- Publication of a Service Statement by end of March 2014.
- Develop a funding plan for our service initiatives, drawing on existing budgets, grant funding and other sources.

4.9 Associate Cities will need to submit the following by 22 November 2013:

- One side of A4 detailing why you are interested in participating
- Details of how your service initiatives will be led including roles, reporting lines and which staff or teams will be involved.
- Details of who will be the figurehead or ambassador for the programme in your city – this could be an internal leadership figure (e.g. Mayor) or a notable person in the community who can support and advocate for your Team.
- A draft of your Service Statement setting out:
 - The specific local challenge that we want to address by mobilising volunteers and details of how we have arrived at that priority.
 - The specific metrics that we will use to measure impact against that challenge, including what data we will use and how it will be collected.
 - Proposals for up to two service initiatives that we plan to implement to address that local challenge. These can be well developed (including ideas from the blueprints set out below) or early stage ideas. We need to set out how they will address the local challenges we have identified and outline our implementation plans.
- A draft budget covering two years of our programme. This should include details of matched funding from existing resources from the Council or local partners, as well as assumptions about grant and other funding.

4.10 Blueprints for service initiatives

Nesta have selected three blueprints that have been tried and tested in the US and which they think – based on feedback they received at their September conference – can be translated to the UK. Terminology and definitions may be amended for the UK context. The Blueprints are...

- **Love Your Block:** Love Your Block is a high-impact service strategy in which the city engages community members in revitalizing their neighbourhoods one block at a time.
- **Sustainable Home Makeover:** Sustainable Home Makeover is a high-impact service strategy in which the city engages volunteers to help homeowners assess their home's energy efficiency and perform simple renovations to improve it.
- **Let's Grow:** Let's Grow is a high-impact service strategy in which the city engages volunteers to improve access to healthy foods in low-income neighbourhoods where grocery stores and fresh produce markets are scarce.

If we select one of these blueprints, Nesta will work with us and the other cities that select it to adapt it to the UK context. We can also design your own initiative, but we will need to provide details on how these initiatives address our identified challenge and will be implemented.

More details on the three Blueprints above will be available at the meeting.

4.11 The selection criteria are shown in Appendix 2.

4.12 The timeline for submissions is as follows:

- **By 5pm on 4 November 2013:** Email to express interest to Meera Chadha (meera.chadha@nesta.org.uk) and confirm if you will be applying for Partner City or Associate City level
- **Starting w/c 28 October:** We will hold weekly conference calls where cities can ask questions about the process.
- **By 5pm on 22 November 2013:** Submit written application (detailed above) to Meera Chadha (meera.chadha@nesta.org.uk)
- **w/c 2 December 2013:** Interviews or local visits with shortlisted candidates.

4.13 During a conference call last week, Nesta clarified a number of issues relating to the scheme and potential bids. Details of these are included in Appendix 3.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer	Not Applicable
Financial officer	Not Applicable
Human Resources officer	Not Applicable
Estates/Property officer	Not Applicable
Service Director(s)	Not Applicable
Other(s)	Chief Executive

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Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Selection Criteria Appendix 3 – Clarification of Issues

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 Funding available from Nesta to support the scheme for successful bidders is outlined within the report.

Legal

- 2.1 None contained within this report.

Personnel

- 3.1 Partner Cities have to appoint a Chief Service Officer as outlined within the report.

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 None contained within this report.

Health and Safety

- 5.1 None contained within this report.

Environmental Sustainability

- 6.1 None contained within this report.

Property and Asset Management

- 7.1 None contained within this report.

Risk Management

- 8.1 None contained within this report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 9.1 This initiative would support the Council's corporate priorities.

Selection criteria

Based on the interest in the programme so far, the first wave is likely to be highly competitive. The numbers of cities that can participate are being restricted so that Nesta can be confident they can deliver the right quality and quantity of support to them. Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Understanding of and commitment to the programme and its goals. While we know that you already have great volunteering initiatives that you are rightly proud of, this programme isn't about rebranding what you're already doing. You will need to demonstrate your commitment to the Cities of Service movement and to working with us to adapt it successfully to the UK.
- Focus on impact. We are particularly looking for Partner Cities and Associate Cities that are clear about the local challenges they are trying to address and how they will know that they are making a difference to those issues.
- Viability of your plans. We are not expecting all of the details of your plans to be finalised by the submission deadline, but we do want to be confident that the first wave of cities are able to deliver.
- Commitment of resources. You will need to clearly demonstrate how you are leveraging funding from the Cabinet Office and Nesta through existing resources or accessing new matched funding.

Although funding will be awarded for two years, Nesta will review progress against Service Plans and Statements to determine eligibility for the second year of funding. Associates may be given the opportunity to apply for Partner funding after the first year.

Partner/Associate

1. If we apply to become an Associate City in the first phase, are we allowed to 'graduate' and apply to become a Partner City in any second or subsequent phase?
 - a. *Yes, but this will be subject to performance as an Associate against City Volunteer Statement, and a further application process*
2. Can areas apply to be both Partner and Associate cities so if the preference is to be a Partner but we are unsuccessful we could still be considered for Associate status?
 - a. *You can apply for either Partner or Associate – please only submit one application, as the process is very similar. You can flag if your preferred approach is to be considered for Associate if Partner is unsuccessful so we take it into consideration.*

Challenges

3. Would 'Building stronger and resilient communities' be a valid local priority or are you looking for more detail on local service challenge?
 - a. *Challenges should be measurable and impactful, and focused on outcomes. Our concern with "stronger and resilient communities" is in knowing why you want a stronger and resilient community - what outcome do you wish to influence as a result?*
4. Are cross cutting local challenges valid for submission e.g. the number of volunteers being matched to local service opportunities?
 - a. *Whilst we're interested to see how service can address key challenges, we do want to challenges to be specific problems, which can be solved by measurable initiatives.*
 - b. *Participant numbers are useful, but our primary aim will be to measure outcomes, so number of volunteers matched to opportunities would not be sufficient.*
5. If we have an existing plan for the Council, should we link our Service Plan to the challenges we've identified there?
 - a. *Yes – we would like to see City Service Plans well integrated with existing plans and council aspirations. How can service help deliver the plan, or meet your challenges? These should be focussed on 2 challenges, with up to 2 initiatives to address each for Partner applications, and 1 challenge and up to 2 initiatives for Associates.*

6. Two Challenges – What sort of evidence will we need to demonstrate these?
 - a. *In the application, we wish to see how you have determined that your challenge is an issue for your city. This could be through focus groups, surveys, review of current statistical data, etc.*
 - b. *Addressing the challenge should be measurable. When designing the initiatives, we would expect to see what metrics you will use to show you have had an impact in addressing the challenge. The evidence will vary depending on the metric.*

7. Can we develop our own challenges that don't fit with the recommended blueprints? We might want to address youth unemployment for example.
 - a. *The blueprints included were guidance, but you're welcome to develop your own based on your city's specific challenges.*
 - b. *Do make sure you're addressing a specific part of the challenge that can be measured to show impact. Some problems are understandably broad, but we want to focus effort and resource to make sure we're addressing issues in such a way that has a tangible impact.*

Chief Service Officer

8. Do you see this as full time post and are you expecting an open application process or will internal appointments be acceptable? Also when you say "dedicated" CSO is that the person will be solely working on Cities of Service or could they potentially be half time on this and half time on another initiative?
 - a. *CSO should be a full-time post.*
 - b. *It can be an internal appointment or open depending on the needs and existing capabilities of council staff. Previous post should be backfilled if internal.*
 - c. *CSO should be solely working on Cities of Service.*

9. Does the Chief Service Officer need to be employed by the Local Authority?
 - a. *Yes – although they can be recruited externally, they will need to be employed by the Local Authority.*
 - b. *Other external organisations/individuals can be engaged to work with the CSO, or partner with them once in post.*
 - c. *Experience from the US tells us that the CSO needs to be involved with strategic decision making in the Local Authority (LA), and how service can address city challenges to ensure there is a focus in city government. We recommend that they are physically located with other LA staff.*

Funding Plan

10. Have you a feel for the level of match funding you are looking for?
- a. *Match funding will depend on the budget you require – we don't have any specific proportions or amounts.*
 - b. *As part of the application process, we will assess if your budget is realistic, and that you've thought through how you will supplement any funding we provide.*

Application Process / Draft Service Plan

11. What level of detail are you expecting to see in the draft service plan as part of the Partner application, will you be issuing any further guidance or a template?
- a. *The document sent on Monday outlines all the information we wish to see in the application. We are happy for you to develop these in your own format.*
 - b. *We understand that this cannot be fully detailed plans, but we want to see how much you're able to define, your approach to developing your plan, and any further work you need to complete.*
 - c. *The weekly calls are available for you to ask questions, and Meera is available to answer specific queries in the interim. There won't be any further application documents or templates issued.*
12. Is there a specific template you wish us to complete, or will a narrative that addresses all the aspects of the application be sufficient?
- a. *We have not designed a specific template, as we do not want to limit your approach. A narrative that addresses the application questions is fine, or any other format that addresses the areas listed in the application.*

Eligibility

13. Does the area have to actually be designated as a city to be eligible? If not, is there a required population size to be eligible?
- a. *All the cities that have been sent the application are deemed eligible to apply. We have only sent the application to 26 cities, who responded to the original call in August to participate.*