

Name of meeting/event	<b>Croydon's Voluntary Sector Alliance (CVSA) An Introduction to (ESIF) European Funding</b>
Date & time of meeting	<b>Thursday 30 April 2015, 10am- 1pm</b>
Organised by	<b>Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA)</b>
Chairman/Facilitator	<b>Bhupendra Solanki, Head of Capacity Building, CVA</b>
Minute taker	<b>Sarah Burns, Head of Communities (shared), CVA</b>
Venue	<b>CVA Resource Centre, 82 London Road. CR0 2TB</b>

Attendance: On a separate document.

Twitter: @CroydonVa

Bhupendra Solanki welcomed and introduced the meeting.

### **Overview of EISF Funding and Local Enterprise Partnership**

**Vincent O'Connell**, Senior EU Funding Officer, stated that European Social Funding (ESF) is for everyone including the Voluntary Sector and is best delivered at a local level. Essentially it is a labour market programme for individuals to enter and remain in employment. It is not a training programme. Successful bids will be needs driven, make a compelling case and the bulk of activity will be with people with the majority of costs on staff time. For the full presentation see the following link: <http://www.cvalive.org.uk/assets/documents/cvsa-esif-presentation>

### **Building Better Opportunities Coast to Capital PDF Event**

**Russell Darbon**, Policy & Learning Manager, Big Lottery Fund Spring/Summer 2015, stated that this presentation was on the latest position and not the definitive position. The launch date is still expected for 'early June'. Big Lottery/ESF is targeted at those people furthest from the labour market. The other programmes will pick up the easier people. Big Lottery do not want payment by results, but there may need to be some element of this, such as key stage/key milestone payments. There will be some money paid up-front. For partnership guidance see The Big Lottery website: <https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/>

For the full presentation see the following link:

<http://www.cvalive.org.uk/assets/documents/cvsa-coast-to-capital-presenta>

## Q & A

**Q** Can organisations be a part of more than 1 partnership bid?

**A** Organisations can join more than 1 partnership as long as it is not stated in the partnership TOR that they cannot do so.

**Q** ESF monitoring is so onerous is Big Lottery the same?

**A** Monitoring and audit regulations are the same, there has been a lot of talk about simplification but it hasn't happened.

**Q:** If an organisation bids but wants to sub-contract to local groups would the local groups need to be named?

**Q** Funding will not be given to organisations to sub-contract. Preference will be given to applications with known delivery partners. Unknown partners bring an element of risk to applications.

**Q** What is the relationship between the European Social Fund and Big Lottery?

**A** Big Lottery Trustees saw an opportunity to support the ESF offer.

**Q** Is there a maximum bid?

**A** The maximum amount is not yet known

## **Support and resources available to you**

**Bhupendra Solanki**, Head of Capacity Building at CVA, stated that ESF is open to everyone and recommended the following website for easy to follow info: [www.vaac.uk/esfaareness](http://www.vaac.uk/esfaareness). The website allows group/organisations to register their interest and to state the geography that they cover so that potential partners can be identified.

Croydon is based in two LEP areas, Coast to Capital and London. London Councils are expected to announce their programmes in Sept. Steve Phaure is the voluntary sector representative working with Jivco Hristov, Croydon Council.

**Steve Phaure:** In March we announced that CVA will co-ordinate a partnership bid through CVSA. As many voluntary sector providers as possible will be included, funders will be looking for small, community based providers and larger organisations like CAB. We don't need to be shy about our potential or our track record.

**Q** Will you be putting a bid to both LEPs?

**A** Yes, we could potentially put in more than one bid but we do not want to duplicate as Commissioners will not be impressed. Steve Phaure to hold 1 to 1 meetings with groups/organisations interested in being part of the bids and invited VCS colleagues to initiate meeting with him. CVA's website contains all info.: <http://www.cvalive.org.uk/empowering-the-community/networks/croydon-voluntary-sector-allia/>

## Q & A

**Q** Will the applications process start in June?

**A** Big Lottery has to have an agreement in place to act as an opt in. It is being considered by government now but has to come back to the shadow committee. In terms of LEPs and opt in organisations, such as Big Lottery, it's really challenging for both parties to get ready in the time frame. There's a huge number of unknowns.

**Q** What is a partnership bid?

**A** It's a bid with more than one delivery partner.

**Q** Is there scope for capacity building within the bid?

**A** Developing local provision could be part of the bid, business support or organisation support.

**A** Capacity Building means past thinking. It is the 11<sup>th</sup> thematic objective but the UK government has not signed up to it.

**Q** Can capacity building be part of thematic objective 9?

**A** No, but money can benefit, 'operators in a named sector' so it can be used to support business but not capacity building.

**Q** Can Big Lottery money be used for capacity building?

**A** All ESF has to be match funding. Capacity building is not within ESF as the UK government has ruled not to include capacity building. The same rules of grant apply to match funding.

**Q** Does match funding have to be money?

**A** Yes, 'cash match'. Staff time can be used but volunteer time is notional, however it is not stated that you can't use volunteer time.

**Q** If a staff team or managers give additional time, not paid for by the grant, is that considered 'match funding'?

**Q** It's difficult to understand. Who does the funding come from? Does each country get similar amounts?

**A** Some of it goes back to member states. There are calculations based on GDP and levels of need. Detailed negotiations follow.

**Q** Is there any simplified information on match funding?

**A** Vincent agreed to find and share previous documents from 2007-13. The programme will lay these out but this has not been shared yet.

**Q** Has any minimum funding amount been set?

**A** We don't know that yet.

**Q** Previously small grants were included, is that likely for 2014-15?

**A** I don't think it is.

**A** EU money will be aligned with UK programmes. There has been a loss of visibility for ESF. London is different as there are management programmes.

**Bhupendra Solanki:** Let us know in your feedback if you are interested in future dialogue. All organisations can make their own bid. CVA will lead a voluntary and community sector bid through CVSA.

### Further info.:

Stage 1 Application – you need to name your project partners but not submit a partnership agreement.

Submit Stage 2 - partnership agreements will need to be in place.

LVSC have an expression of interest form on their [VCS Assist website](#) so that orgs can see what each other are interested in and if want to develop partnerships.

Next meeting: Monday 15 June, 10am- 1pm, CVA Resource Centre

