

Initiation Form

Summary		Reference:	COM006
Activity Name:	Community Connectivity & Digital Inclusion		
Activity Description:	Projects which improve digital connectivity, digital inclusion and skills.		
Investment Priority:	Communities and Place	Intervention:	<p>E11: Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups</p> <p>E15: Investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities</p>
Funding Available:	£ 1,500,000 (Total)	£ 900,000 (Capital)	£ 600,000 (Revenue)
Open Date: Application	05/08/2022	Close Date:	16/09/2022

Context
Description: Description of the activity and what is expected to be achieved
<p>Project(s) commissioned under this investment priority will help people and communities within Cornwall & Isles of Scilly (CloS) to gain access to online services and information. It will also improve the capacity of people to engage in digital services, civil society, health, education, training and employment opportunities</p> <p>Activities that can supported, but not limited to, are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to digital Infrastructure for local community facilities, widening community access to getting online in areas lacking free superfast broadband or digital exclusion 'hot-spots'. Providing the network and associated equipment at no cost and maintaining broadband access. • Adaptations to community facilities to enable shared and/or private access to devices and services. For instance, this might include making physical changes to a venue, to provide a new or enhanced private/ dedicated space to use internet services and devices and to deliver digital training and support. • Access to devices (lending library) providing and maintaining new and recycled tablets and laptops that are free to borrow, helping people become more confident and independent users of digital devices and the internet. The devices will help individuals who would like to access services and information online but are prevented due to cost, aren't sure what device to buy or don't frequently use devices, or generally lack confidence. Borrowers should have the support from a digital champion

to make full use of the device whilst on loan. Provision should also be made to ensure devices are completely clean of any previous data when loaned and when they are returned, all data being erased, and the device reset and cleaned. Access to data/shared Wi-Fi/5G or similar, providing free internet access to those who need it most, improving opportunities for education, training, employment social inclusion and community entertainment events and activities. This may include the provision of data packages either free, or at a highly subsidised cost to some individuals.

- Training programmes to support civil society, community leaders and residents to access digital services through volunteers, digital champions and other providers. Provision of train the trainer training and digital skills training for residents, designed to meet local need and help all ages make the most from free/subsidised Wi-Fi and their own or loaned devices. Whilst also supporting residents to have more trust and confidence online and thrive in an increasingly digital world.
- Provide digital skills support from community facilities at a time and pace suited to different residents' requirements.
- Provision of, or help to secure, digital work experience opportunities for residents identified with a particular interest in employment in the digital sector.
- Marketing support for communities to recruit local volunteers and digital champions, promotion of free broadband/Wi-Fi access, access to devices and digital skills training support (and signposting to other digital training and support not funded within this project).

Projects should bring together voluntary, public and private sectors to provide access to broadband, devices, data, information, advice and guidance to engage individuals and communities in digital services such as healthcare, training, education and skills and budgeting, for example.

Projects should identify the most digital excluded areas and improve community facilities to enable access to digital connectivity, devices and delivery of basic digital skills training; whilst enabling individuals to improve confidence, resilience, financial skills and the ability to access and engage in civil society more widely.

Strategic Alignment: Description of how proposals should meet strategic objectives, local need and the programme priorities. Expectations for coordination with other funding programmes.

Proposals should demonstrate evidence showing their strategic fit and link to local community, social or economic needs.

This opportunity contributes significantly to the achievement of Government's Mission 4 for Levelling Up: Nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population.

This opportunity contributes significantly to the achievement of Government's Mission 6 for Levelling Up: 200,000 more people per year completing high quality skills training.

Communities and place Objectives:

- Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and community-led projects.
- Building resilient, safe and healthy neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention.

Interventions:

- E15: Investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities.
- E11: Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society

Our Good Growth Investment Plan identifies that digital connectivity is a particularly pertinent issue for Cornwall & Isles of Scilly. The importance of good connectivity and capacity is only exacerbated in light of Cornwall Council's aim to achieve net zero by 2030, the increasing trend around remote and hybrid working and businesses and services becoming digitalised. Through significant levels of previous investment, CloS has a UK leading digital infrastructure in place attracting new high-tech business to the area, enabling more flexible working so that employees can choose where they live, rather than commuting/living in larger urban areas. Allowing current enterprises involved in the service economy to tackle the challenge of distance.

Digital is a cross cutting theme through all the strategies, plans and visions for Cornwall and Isles of Scilly. All of the documents outlined below, set out a clear direction and ambition for the citizens of CloS over the coming years:-

- Cornwall Strategy and Business Plan 2022/2026: our focus on being digital by design is matched with a commitment to access for all. Be a digital Council and help all of our residents get online, tackling digital exclusion.
- Local Skills and Labour Market Strategy 2021-2030: That our rural communities are supported to thrive through better digital access, innovative hyper-local services and facilities.
- Digital Inclusion Strategy 2019-2023: Supports Cornwall's digital inclusion strategy 2019-2023 and vision where Cornwall & Isles of Scilly residents and organisations understand the benefits of digital, feel the benefits, stay safe online and are supported to develop their skills and thrive in an increasingly digital world.
- CloS Local Industrial Strategy: Over 40% of the population live in settlements of less than 3,000 people. Consequently, these places are a major resource in the future economy of CloS and will increasingly depend on digital connectivity. Plus, sustainable and affordable transport to sustain employment, population and vitality in these communities. Our future economy will be built on creativity and technology. Capitalising on consistent investment in creative and digital infrastructure.
- Digital Skills Deep Dive 2022

According to the 2021 Lloyds Bank Consumer Digital Index, the South West region is one of five with the highest proportion of people still offline. The report also looked at the proportion of adults in each region that have Life Essential Digital Skills compared to the UK average (79%), with the South West being one of the furthest behind at 75%

The Centre for Economic and Business Research has identified five areas in which individuals who acquire basic digital skills are able to benefit.

- **Earnings** – these relate to increased earnings of between 3% and 10% through acquiring digital skills
- **Employability** – reflecting the improved chances of finding work for someone who is unemployed and increased likelihood that someone who is inactive will look for work.
- **Retail transactions** – shopping online has been found to be 13% cheaper on average than shopping in store
- **Communication** – acquiring this digital skill enables people to connect with family, friends and the community 14% more frequently
- **Time saving** – relating to accessing government services and banking online rather than person estimated to be 30 minutes per transaction

The Covid-19 Pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis has highlighted both the increasing reliance on technology as a society, as communities and as individuals and the significant disadvantage experienced by those not

digitally connected. As digital access and skills increasingly become the foundation of a competitive economy, it is vitally important that our community organisations and small businesses are able to develop their online services and presence, while also supporting customers, families and workforce, to develop the skills and confidence needed to benefit from all the advantages the internet brings.

In recognition of these community connectivity and digital inclusion gaps, the Digital Skills Partnership commissioned research to identify digital inclusion barriers across Cornwall. The commission also tested a range of interventions to ascertain how communities and individuals responded. The research makes it clear that there is no silver bullet to resolve digital inclusion; instead, there is a need to provide a menu of options that community influencers and individuals can call in, some will need all options from the menu, whilst others just need access to one: kit, connectivity, skills and motivation.

Using this as a basis, the Digital Skills Partnership has worked closely with the [Council's Digital Inclusion Team](#) to deliver a pilot project which should be used as the basis of; and built upon for any project applications for this funding opportunity.

The pilot Digital Inclusion Hub acts as a one stop shop for residents and community influencers seeking information, advice and guidance, signposting and practical support to help them gain digital skills to enable them to access services and facilities and where appropriate moving closed to employment and training opportunities.

Applicants should also demonstrate how their proposal will complement mainstream funded activity, highlighting what wrap-around support is being proposed, and how communities and beneficiaries will be identified and engaged.

Where appropriate, alignment with and signposting to Multiply provision.

Please note:

- Cornwall Council reserves the right to allocate more or less funding than the values set out in this Invitation to bid.
- This invitation to bid is subject to DLUHC sign-off of the CloS Good Growth SPF Investment Plan

All funding expended should contribute to the "Good Growth" requirements outlined in the CloS UK SPF Investment plan. Higher levels of funding distribution may be spent on projects, activity or initiatives that deliver the greatest contribution to these objectives, especially where they are located and/or target the areas and people of Cornwall and the IoS most in need of levelling up.

Route to Market: Open Invitation

Explanation of the chosen route to market:

In order to meet subsidy control requirements and identify the projects that will deliver best value for money an open invitation to bid is viewed as the most appropriate route to market. Applications are welcomed from partnerships, individual organisations and include voluntary, community, public and private sector organisations. Project(s) must be delivered by a legally constituted organisation that can receive public funds.

Specific Requirements: Please identify any specific requirements

In line with our Good Growth principles, preference will be weighted towards organisations with business operations and employment base already in CloS.

The minimum contact award value is set at £150,000. We reserve the right to ask applicants to submit a full Business Case prior to contracting where appropriate.

Cornwall Council encourages applicants to maximise the leverage of other funding. However, we recognise not all projects, or applicants will be able to secure match funding. Applicants should note value for money will be a selection consideration as it has a number of benefits, including enhanced alignment with other provision and efficient delivery which increases value for money. Therefore, we will take the overall funding package for each project, including any match funding, into account.

Proposals should:

1. Set out how people and skills opportunities can be included as part of wider project delivery and how the proposals will link to existing people and skills activities for example, Multiply, apprenticeships, traineeships, work placements and work experience opportunities.
2. Demonstrate how activity will complement and not duplicate mainstream and other funded activity. Highlighting the wrap-around support being proposed, and how communities and beneficiaries to be supported will be identified and engaged.
3. Respond to a clearly identified need and clearly describe the need.
4. Not conflict with national policy or local strategies.

Budget & Spend Profile								
Funding Available:	£ 1,500,000 (Total)		£ 900,000 (Capital)		£ 600,000 (Revenue)			
Minimum Award:	£ 150,000		Maximum Award:		£ 1,500,000 <i>Cornwall Council reserves the right to allocate more or less funding than the values set out in this Invitation to Tender</i>			
	22/23		23/24		24/25		Total	
Intervention (E)	Capital (£m)	Revenue (£m)	Capital (£m)	Revenue (£m)	Capital (£m)	Revenue (£m)	Capital (£m)	Revenue (£m)
<i>E11: Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups.</i>	0	0	0	0.1	0.35	0.15	0.35	0.25
<i>E15: Investment and support for digital infrastructure</i>	0	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.25	0.15	0.55	0.35

<i>for local community facilities.</i>								
Total	0	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.9	0.6
Total per year	0.1		0.5		0.9		1.5	
Intervention Rate:	80-100 % (Maximum)			Target Leverage:	£ 300,000 (Total)			
Spend Start:	01/04/2022			Spend End:	31/03/2025			

Good Growth Principles

All SPF investments must be made in consideration of the Equality Act 2010. It is mandatory for all applications to assess impact of their project between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In addition, the following specific good growth principles must be considered for this activity:

Clean and Green		Business / Economy		Equality/Inclusive growth	
C1 Reduction in CO2 emissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	BE1 Increase % of workforce earning real living wage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	EQ1 Invest in projects that encourage a healthy lifestyle	<input type="checkbox"/>
C2 Circularity - reduction in use of virgin raw materials. Recycle reuse principles	<input type="checkbox"/>	BE2 Improve productivity of businesses in CloS	<input type="checkbox"/>	EQ2 Reduce gender pay gap	<input type="checkbox"/>
G1 Nature recovery	<input type="checkbox"/>	BE3 Contribute positively to CloS economy, environment and equality through purchasing/procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	EQ3 Increased levels of functional numeracy and literacy in the adult population	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
G2 Attracting private sector green finance income to Cornwall	<input type="checkbox"/>			EQ4 Maximise opportunity for people with disability and ill health (including mental health)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Contribute to the Environmental Growth Strategy for Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	<input type="checkbox"/>			EQ5 Maximise work based opportunities for those with SEND particularly relating to spectrum disorders and dyslexia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
				EQ6 support for the aging population to remain economically active	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
				EQ7 Support young (under 30) entrepreneurs	<input type="checkbox"/>

			EQ8 Levelling-up of towns and neighbourhoods throughout CloS	<input type="checkbox"/>
			EQ9 Increased capacity and place-based leadership in communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			EQ10 Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (Equality Act 2010)	<input type="checkbox"/>
			EQ11 Assist individuals with complex barriers to employment to access opportunities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			EQ 12 Have a positive impact on children and promote and uphold children's rights under UNCRC	<input type="checkbox"/>

Outputs/Outcomes

For this invitation, we are looking for activity that delivers the following outputs and outcomes:

E11: Capacity building & infrastructure support local groups	Output / Outcome	Total for the period 2022/23 – 2024/25
Number of organisations receiving grants	Output	18
Number of facilities supported/created	Output	9
Number of people attending training sessions	Output	405
Number of new or improved community facilities as a result of support	Outcome	7
E15: Investment support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities	Output / Outcome	Total for the period 2022/23 – 2024/25
Number of organisations receiving grants	Output	13
Number of new or improved community facilities as a result of support	Outcome	13
Number of premises with improved digital connectivity	Outcome	3

The outputs and outcomes stated here reflect our Investment Plan submission to Government. Applicants should note Cornwall Council reserves the right to adjust and refine these outputs and outcomes as delivery progresses during the duration of our SPF programme and further national guidance becomes available.

Appraisal Criteria

Strategic Alignment	Good Growth	Deliverability	Value for Money
30 %	20 %	30 %	20 %
Explanation for criteria weighting			
As the project spans across the full 3-year programme, slightly higher weightings for strategic alignment and deliverability have been allocated. This will ensure that we secure project(s) that have high levels of strategic fit and that can commence delivery in year 1.			

For further information on the programme please refer to the [Good Growth website](#). Completed Applications and relevant documentation must be submitted via email to goodgrowth@cornwall.gov.uk before the deadline stated on this Form.

Support and guidance to assist applicants through the application process is available at [Good Growth website](#).

More information on Shared Prosperity Fund can be found on the UK Government website; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus>

Date Updated:	02/08/2022	Lead:	Good Growth Team
----------------------	-------------------	--------------	-------------------------