

WELCOME!

Welcome to the first edition of the East London CVS Networks [ELN] E-News.



Issue 7 / Sept 2009

CONTENTS

- **CAPACITYBUILDERS**
- **EAST TENDERS**
- **ECONOMIC DOWNTURNS AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR**
- **LIVING PLACES & LONDON THAMES GATEWAY**
- **MONEY SAVING TIPS**
- **THE BIG OPPORTUNITY FACEBOOK GROUP**
- **UPDATES**
 - **NAVCA**
 - **FUTUREBUILDERS ENGLAND AND THE FUNDS IT MANAGES**
 - **SKILLS FOR CARE**
 - **VOLUNTEERING**

CAPACITYBUILDERS

Modernisation Fund

In 2009, 176 Voluntary and Community organisations in London were awarded a £1000 bursary with which to explore collaborative working between partner agencies and mergers. Of the 176 organisations, 116 said they were exploring their options, 38 had already selected a potential partner and 22 were considering a shortlist of partners.

In the East London sub region, 34 organisations were successful and have had an advisor appointed to them and this number is subject to change the more bursary holders complete the verification process and have advisors appointed.

<http://capacitybuilders.org.uk/content/ModernisationFund.aspx>

Economic downturns and the voluntary sector: what can we learn from historical evidence?

In a 'History & Policy' paper, Southampton University Prof John Mohan and National Council for Voluntary Organisations Head of Research Karl Wilding examine the accounts of British voluntary hospitals in the interwar period and giving trends in North America in the Great Depression era 1929-31. They conclude that: a recession's impact depends as much on the internal management, decision making and resources of charities as on external circumstances; the proportion of individual giving will remain generally constant, but more unemployed people mean lower giving capacity; the biggest charities are not necessarily best placed to maintain incomes; and Charity Commission data suggests that the formation rate of new charities has increased during recessions.

<http://tinyurl.com/n2pr4k>



Future Jobs Fund Success

East Tenders has won a Future Jobs Fund contract with the Department of Work and Pensions. This tender was submitted in partnership with the London Borough of Redbridge and 15 local 3rd Sector providers. Starting in October 2009 this project will create 115 new jobs for unemployed young people. Further details will be announced when the contract has been finalised.

www.easttenders.com

LIVING PLACES & LONDON THAMES GATEWAY

Proposed development of the London Thames Gateway is earmarked as one of the largest regeneration programmes in Europe and is on par with the Olympics. However, whilst the Olympics has clearly placed sports and culture at the forefront of our thoughts, what is being done to ensure high quality sporting, leisure and cultural facilities are embedded into the new developments of the Gateway?

Cont'd Page 2

London Living Places Partnership [LLPP] is a programme based on an alliance between five leading agencies and includes; the Arts Council the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), English Heritage, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council - London (MLA) and Sport England. The East London CVS Network and Thames Gateway London Partnership also sit on the LLPP feeding into the work of the programmes activities.

Involved in creating communities through culture and sport, the LLPP in recent times has researched and highlighted the significance of culture and sports in building cohesive and empowered communities. This has been the driving force of the Partnerships programme whose three main objectives are;

1. To provide those people who are shaping communities with information, advice and support on the use of culture and sport to create better places.
2. To align investment from the sporting and cultural sector with sustainable communities funding across organisational boundaries so it works harder for people.
3. To empower communities to make cultural and sporting activity and infrastructure a part of their lives.

Involved in creating communities through culture and sport, the LLPP in recent times has researched and highlighted the significance of culture and sports in building cohesive and empowered communities. This has been the driving force of the Partnerships programme whose three main objectives are;

Involved in creating communities through culture and sport, the LLPP in recent times has researched and highlighted the significance of culture and sports in building cohesive and empowered communities. This has been the driving force of the Partnerships programme whose three main objectives are;

4. To provide those people who are shaping communities with information, advice and support on the use of culture and sport to create better places.
5. To align investment from the sporting and cultural sector with sustainable communities funding across organisational boundaries so it works harder for people.
6. To empower communities to make cultural and sporting activity and infrastructure a part of their lives.

In order to meet these objectives, LLPP have agreed an eight point action plan to embed sport and culture into communities, these including the provision of a gateway to information and best practice and an online planning 'toolkit' for anyone involved in planning cultural provision.

London Living Places is currently focused on five priority areas to help planners and those involved in the regeneration of communities to understand the role culture and sport plays within communities, the barriers that prevent culture being built into communities and the policy solutions that can be developed to breakdown those barriers.

For further information, visit their website at www.living-places.org.uk

Money Saving Tips

Still in the grips of the economic downturn, the recession has got everyone counting every last pound. Below are just a few suggestions that could save you help you reduce your overheads and save money over the long term.

Switching Suppliers

We have all seen the TV adverts encouraging us to switch gas and electricity supplier to save money, well, that same principal can be used to save money in a business environment too.

It's very easy to become complacent and stick with who and what you know and even though there is no one stop shop price comparison website for business, a little time invested in doing some research either online or by using the Yellow Pages, could save hundreds and perhaps even thousands of pounds a year, by switching to an alternative supplier.

Here are just a few areas you could consider sourcing alternative suppliers;

1. Phone line rental, staff mobiles & internet service providers
2. Training
3. Room and meeting hire
4. Catering, refreshments & water coolers
5. Cleaning
6. Photocopiers, printing and reproduction
7. Utility suppliers

Reduce Office rental costs through flexible working

Good staff is an organisations greatest asset, carrying with them a wealth of knowledge and skills often built up over a number of years. Flexible working is one way that could prevent you from having to make good staff redundant.

How?

1. Ask your staff how many of them would like to and can afford to reduce their working hours. Four staff members reducing their hours by 7 hours a week means that 1 other person could continue to work 4 days a week. Obviously, it is not as straight forward as that, but the general principal when applied does work. [See the Chartered Institute of Personal Development Research **Smart Working: the impact of work organisation** and job design, **Employee Engagement in Context** and the Acas guide **Employee Communications and Consultation**].
2. Consider allowing staff to work from home 1 or 2 days a week. If staff have a PC and internet connection at home, within an hour through 'implementing a **virtual private network**', staff can remotely access their desktop, emails and files. They'll even be able to print to the office printer!

With a reduced number of staff in the office at any one time as a result of either working from home or being at meetings, you could;

1. Reduce the amount of space you rent
2. Move to a smaller office or building
3. Rent out the desk or office space saved
4. Share offices with another organisation

More Money Saving Tips

1. Switch to money saving light bulbs
2. Encourage staff to turn off their monitors when away from their desks
3. Turn off lights in toilets and kitchens when not in use
4. Turn the temperature down 1 degree on the water and heating thermostat and up 1 degree on the air condition thermostat
5. Fit a duplex unit to printers so they can print on both sides of the paper
6. Change the default settings on printers to the lowest resolution and black and white
7. Make all non urgent calls after 1pm when the rate is cheaper
8. Don't print spare copies of papers for meetings, but ask people to bring their copies with them
9. If you have a small meeting meet in a local cafe, rather than booking a meeting room
10. Turn unwanted paper into scrap note pads
11. Buy electrical goods with a 'A' energy efficiently rating

Reduce it and reuse it – Find inventive ways to go green by recycling and re-using equipment rather than replacing it. [See [the London Community Recycling Network](#) website].

THE BIG OPPORTUNITY FACEBOOK GROUP

Undoubtedly one of the most successful social networking websites, you can now legitimately log onto Facebook during working hours! The Big Opportunity now has its very own Facebook group where you can network with other organisations, exchange ideas and information.

If you were unable to attend the 'Gains after the Games' Conference which took place in June at the Sadler Wells Theatre, simply log onto The Big Opportunity Facebook page where you will be able to view images from the day and read presentations from each of the guest speakers and workshops.

<http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=124180&id=84967066084>

If you have access to a Facebook account, you can go directly to our Big Opportunity Fan Page at <http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/The-Big-Opportunity/84967066084?ref=ts>

UPDATES

NAVCA named as a delivery partner for IDeA National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning

IDeA has been awarded the contract for the second phase of the National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning by the Office of the Third Sector (OTS) and they have recruited third sector partners, including NAVCA, to help deliver the programme.

The programme runs until March 2011 and will improve the contribution of third sector organisations to the design and delivery of public services. The programme will also develop the commissioning skills and bidding capacity of third sector organisations.

As a delivery partner NAVCA, through its members, will provide direct support with tenders to 150 organisations who are new to bidding or have been unsuccessful in bidding for contracts in the past. NAVCA will also capture the learning from this work and make it more widely available, benefiting other third sector organisations.

Cont'd page 5

Pauline Kimantas, NAVCA's Local Commissioning and Procurement Manager, said

"Third sector organisations want to be more involved in the design and delivery of public services but there is not a level playing field. We are delighted to be part of a programme to create fairer commissioning processes.

"NAVCA will specifically be working with our members to assist local third sector organisations who are either new to bidding or have been unsuccessful in the past. We will help them get over some of the hurdles third sector organisations face and use what we learn to improve commissioning processes for all local groups."

Futurebuilders England and the funds it manages

Futurebuilders England is the UK's largest social investor. Its aim is to substantially improve the capability of the third sector to play an ever greater role in improving the lives of the people and communities it serves.

Futurebuilders provides loan and grant finance, sustained and flexible professional support to organisations that are delivering public services, ensuring that they have the financial, managerial and governance structures to compete successfully for contracts in the public sector or deliver health and social care outcomes.

Futurebuilders manages the government's Modernisation Fund, which offers interest free loans to Third Sector Organisations to come through the recession stronger and more sustainable. Other funds provide investments to organisations that want to increase their capacity to bid for - and win - public sector contracts.

The application process is straightforward - for information, call 0191 261 5200 or email: info@futurebuilders-england.org.uk

<http://www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk/>

Skills for Care Launch online funding guide for Employers

Skills for Care has launched a unique interactive online funding guide after employers complained they were struggling to find their way through the dizzying maze of training resources.

In response to those complaints Skills for Care has created an easy to use guide pulling together for the very first time more than 50 regional or national funding sources. This builds on from the London specific publication titled 'everybody benefits' that can be downloaded via the Skills for Care London website.

At the click of a button progressive employers can now easily access information and guidance on funding, grants, material and resources and training support. Employers can also quickly search specific areas of interest including qualifications, learning development, how to promote learning in the workplace and business development.

All search results are automatically rated on how they meet the employers' needs who can then choose the most appropriate funding source and visit their website to find out more.

The online funding guide can be found at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/funding

Volunteering

The impact of the recession has led to a dramatic increase in the numbers of people registering to undertake volunteering opportunities. But the reality remains for many volunteer centres across the East London sub region, that there is simply a lack of good volunteer placements in which to place people, and in some cases funding by central government is failing to reach the frontline. Kay Kelleher Director of Volunteer Centre Lewisham tells the story local story for Lewisham.

'So far during 2009 Volunteer Centre Lewisham [VCL] has seen a 266%, increase in people wanting to volunteer in Lewisham. To put this into perspective, during the first 3 months of 2008 VCL registered 362 people who were interested in volunteering; during the first 3 months of 2009 we registered 964.

We have received funding through Working Neighbourhoods Fund to run a project that offers people work experience through volunteering. The Pathways Project offers a holistic programme of assessment, 6 months volunteering placement and work skills training. However, there are 2 additional challenges, we are finding that many more very highly skilled people are registering with VCL, these include journalists, people who have experience of marketing and many from a financial background. The fact is that our Pathways Project does not meet the needs of these volunteers.

Another challenge is that we have seen a significant drop in the number of new opportunities being registered. There has been little money available for infrastructure development over recent years and we have been without a worker dedicated to good practice and development work for over a year.

This has a huge impact on how successful we can be at placing people registering to volunteer into good quality, viable opportunities that provide a mutually positive experience.

VCL is also brokering opportunities for people on Job Seekers Allowance who are referred to us by Job Centre Plus. This is a very difficult piece of work, because the advisers at Job Centre Plus do not understand the true concept of volunteering and do not give enough information to the people they are referring.

On the plus side, the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, Lewisham Council, The Mayor and council staff have all responded very positively to our detailed evidence of the increase in enquiries, and we anticipate receiving funding to help us to develop volunteering roles that respond to the economic downturn by being able to respond to people that already have employable skills.

The future looks hectic, but here at VCL we are trying to embrace this, and make the most of partnerships and good relationships with those who are able to support our aims and objectives'.

Kay Kelleher

Director of Volunteer Centre [Lewisham]

East London CVS Network

Andrea Chott co-ordinator

E: andrea.chott@elcvsnetwork.org.uk

Maneesha Sharma co-ordinator

E: maneesha.sharma@elcvsnetwork.org.uk

Josephine Mason administrator

E: josephine.mason@elcvsnetwork.org.uk

T: 020 8519 9500 [option 2]

W: www.elcvsnetwork.org.uk

Visit www.elcvsnetwork.org.uk for latest updates on:

Resources

Jobs

Training/Events

Please feedback your comments on e-news on E: info@elcvsnetwork.org.uk