# Business Support & Addressing Underrepresentation in Creative Industries

# **Creative Grassroots Business Innovation Fund**

1. **Introduction**
   1. Stride is a partnership with a vision to catalyse inclusive growth of the Creative and Digital Industries (**"CDI"**) across the boroughs of Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark and Wandsworth. The City of London Corporation has awarded Strategic Investment Pot (**“SIP”**) £8,000,000 to Stride to deliver Workspace, Business Support and Talent Development activities, with programmes running until March 2022.
   2. The Stride programme includes £352,000 revenue funding to support cross borough grassroots business support. Through this funding, Lambeth Council (in partnership with Lewisham, Southwark and Wandsworth Councils) is seeking to commission a range of projects addressing the underrepresentation of Black, Asian and Multi Ethnic people, women and people from lower income backgrounds in the Creative and Digital industries.
2. **Background & Context**

2.1 The creative industries account for two million jobs and are growing twice as fast as the economy as a whole. There were over 7,500 digital start-ups in London, in 2016, with some 20% of digital companies, high growth. The creative and digital industries (CDI) have benefited from supportive industrial strategy at a national level allied to local level interventions. Joint action by industry and the public sector can unlock further growth and ensure that the benefits are spread evenly.

* 1. Our boroughs are highly diverse, with a high proportion of residents from a Black, Asian and Multi ethnic background, however, the UK’s creative and technology workforce does not reflect this diversity. Research by the Creative Industries Federation shows that Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic people, women, people with disabilities and people from lower-income backgrounds are all under-represented in the creative industries. They are also likely to be in less senior roles.
  2. Start-up statistics indicate that most entrepreneurs will fail within three years without dedicated, holistic support, particularly for entrepreneurs that don’t come from affluent families and who don’t have a support network available to them. Many local people consider becoming self-employed or starting their own CDI business. We want to give people the support and advice they need to explore and develop their business ideas and turn them into a reality.
  3. Stride has an existing, successful, business support programme, One Tech, which offers business support to those wishing to start a digital business. The Creative Grassroots Business Innovation Fund is designed to complement this programme. Through learnings from One Tech, Stride is aware that often fledgling businesses are not as far along in the process as they believe. Many attend a Start-Up weekend and realise that there is more to be achieved before starting their business. The Creative Grassroots Business Innovation Fund is designed to help those businesses at this point in their progression.
  4. Within the Stride area, there are a small number of innovative business support agencies providing new models of business support to residents from disadvantaged backgrounds. Creative and digital enterprises are a popular choice, but funding for this support is increasingly scarce.

2.5 To tackle these issues, the Creative Grassroots Business Innovation programme will be targeted at residents facing significant barriers to starting a creative business. Stride will be commissioning the following activities:

* Practical advice about starting your own business, as well as the opportunity to develop ideas and business concepts
* Specialist knowledge through creative topic workshops, hack-a-thons, start-up weekends, 1-1 coaching and dedicated monitoring
* Core business skills such as marketing, project management and financial literacy
* Access to professional support networks that build social capital.

2.6 This is a one-off grant round with a total value of £352,000. The round will be open from 5 March 2021 until 12 April 2021.

1. **Requirements**
   1. Stride is seeking proposals from a range of organisations, focussed on delivery against one or more of the Business Support outcomes found at Appendix A. It is anticipated that these projects will comprise either:

* Existing projects that could be scaled up through Stride funding, to either increase capacity, expand the range of activities delivered, or expand the geographical footprint of the programme.

Or

* Pilot projects proposing a new approach to delivering Business Support outcomes. While the approach may be innovative, it is expected that proposals can speak to some form of evidence of effectiveness.
* A mixture of both of these

3.2 We welcome the opportunity to match fund programmes particularly if they are extending, scaling, or bringing this programme to the Stride boroughs.

3.3 We welcome bids of a minimum of £100,000 and reserve the right to appoint up to three providers at £100,000 + each or one provider for the total amount of £352,000.

3.4 Proposals should include but are not limited to:

* Who the target group(s) for the programme will be, with a focus on underrepresented groups identified at 1.2
* Stride funding will be used to achieve beneficiary outputs within the ‘Stride geography’ (Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark, Wandsworth) and bids must state the number of residents or businesses from the Stride geography that will receive support through the proposed services. However, we welcome bids from organisations and projects that seek to benefit a wider geography. Equally, we expect to see business engagement within the Stride geography but welcome projects that are capable of connecting our residents and businesses to creative and digital networks elsewhere.
* How potential candidates for the programme will be identified, with a clear engagement strategy for underrepresented groups
* What support the programme will offer, and how it will contribute to supporting grassroots businesses. The programme offer description should articulate how the project is innovative
* A description of how covid-19 implications have been taken into account in project design
* How the proposed programme will link to any established creative business networks
* Will the proposed programme link to any low cost or affordable workspaces that will foster networking for the grassroots businesses
* A rationale, including evidence where available for the proposed approach to programme development and delivery
* Track record description of applicant and project partners
* Full costings for the proposed programme including any confirmed match funding
* An aspect of innovation in at least one of the following – delivery, scope, participants or subject

1. **Reporting** 
   1. Projects will be required to use a bespoke CRM to record project activity and outcomes, for which licenses and training will be provided.
   2. Quarterly reporting on outcomes will be required in line with the funders requirements – if successful a schedule of dates will be provided.
   3. Monitoring meetings will be required on at least a quarterly basis.
   4. GDPR must be taken into account. Stride needs to provide evidence to its funders of outputs, so care must be taken with wording in releases from participants to allow for this.
2. **Tender Process & Timetable**
   1. A timetable for submission process is detailed below. Submissions will be scored within a month of the closing date. There may be the need for interviews. If required, these will be held from 15 April 2021.
   2. Submissions should not exceed seven sides of A4 and should include as a minimum the points detailed Section 3 of this document.

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| --- | --- |
| Output | Target Deadline |
| Specification Published | 5 March 2021 |
| Final date for queries | 19 March 2021 |
| Submission deadline | 5pm 12 April 2021 |
| Funds awarded | By 19 May 2021 |
| Inception meetings (can be virtual) | w/b 26 May 2021 |
| Commencement of delivery | June 2021 |

1. **Submission Scoring**
   1. Submissions will be measured against the following criteria:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria & Key Points 100%** | Score | Weighting out of 100% |
| * Understanding of, and ability to deliver against the brief – who are the targeted groups, where delivery will take place, ability to begin delivery quickly * Understanding of, and ability to address barriers to beginning a creative business for underrepresented groups (see 1.1.) * A communications plan – how will you reach underrepresented groups | 0 - 5 | 15 |
| * Demonstration of how proposed activity links to Business Support outcomes, and opportunities in the wider creative market | 0-5 | 15 |
| * Evidence of impact for proposed delivery * Evidence of innovation * Evidence of links with creative Business networks | 0-5 | 15 |
| * Safeguarding considerations * Supporting residents to begin a business * Understanding of the difficulties faced by businesses in the grassroots stages and how you will target these * Understanding of who is delivering support and safeguarding measures | 0-5 | 10 |
| * Value for money – * Level of resource, and project timescales in relation to proposed funding * Outcome type, and number of outcomes proposed for project delivery * Specialism within proposed provision * Inclusion of secured match funding | 0 - 5 | 45 |

**Scoring**

All criteria will be assessed using a 0-5 scoring system as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Score | Rating | Description |
| 0 | No Response | No proposal has been received  The response is unacceptable. |
| 1 | Unacceptable | A proposal at this rating:   * Builds very little or no confidence that the Tenderer can deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; * Builds very little or no confidence that the Tenderer’s approach/solution will deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence or an inappropriate approach/solution. |
| 2 | Poor | A proposal at this rating:   * Raises reservations that the Tenderer can deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures. Raises reservations that the Tenderer’s approach/solution will deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence or an inappropriate approach/solution. Note: a response at this rating includes reservations which cannot be easily resolved with the Tenderer pre-contract award (i.e. changes which would distort the competition) or during the contract term without impacting time, quality or cost. |
| 3 | Acceptable | A proposal at this rating:   * Confirms that the Tenderer can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; Provides an acceptable approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising standard strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies .Note: an acceptable response may include minor reservations that can easily be resolved with the Tenderer pre-contract award (i.e. changes which would not distort the competition) or during the contract term without impacting time, quality or cost. |
| 4 | Good | A proposal at this rating:   * Builds confidence that the Tenderer can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; Provides a good approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising appropriately tailored strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies. Note: a good response may include a small number of minor reservations that can easily be resolved with the Tenderer pre-contract award (i.e. changes which would not distort the competition) or during the contract term without impacting time, quality or cost. |
| 5 | Excellent | A proposal at this rating:   * Builds a high level of confidence that the Tenderer can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; Provides an exceptional approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising appropriately tailored and at times innovative strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies. Note: an excellent response should not include any reservations. |

A minimum score of 18 will be required in order for the grant to be awarded.

* 1. The council reserves the right to award grants based on:
  + most economically advantageous submissions
  + geographical spread
  + scope of activity

6.3 The council reserves the right to not award all funds in any of the identified rounds if no suitable projects are bought forward. Should this be the case, there will be further grant rounds that may have adjusted outcomes.

1. **Responses & Key Contacts**

7.1. Please return submissions by 5pm 12 April 2021 to:

Nicola Whyte

Stride Programme Manager

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