



Grapevine's Connecting for Good programme: evaluation and learning partner Invitation to Tender, September 2023

1. Introduction

This Invitation to Tender (ITT) invites proposals for an evaluation and learning partner for the Connecting for Good (CfG) programme. We are seeking proposals from individuals/organisations with experience of:

- evaluating community-led programmes, including community organising by charities
- evaluating systems change initiatives
- working as a learning partner
- the 'transformative networks' field of practice

We would like to work with a person/team who can work in an engaged way, closely with the programme team, and experience the programme's activities.

2. About Grapevine

"Grapevine have this engine for creating conditions that enable people to take control of their lives. A think and do tank that's able to transform services and lives wherever they are" - Richard Wilson, Good Help

"Civil society holds the key to tackling some of society's most pressing problems – but we need to learn from and scale the best approaches. Grapevine is the very best." - Sue Tibballs OBE, Chief Executive, The Sheila McKechnie Foundation

"Grapevine is a rare example of an organisation that carries the thread of direct contact with the people it was created to support and the thought-leadership for how that work fits into the bigger picture of our country and our existence as people." - Kathryn Perera, Director, NHS Horizons

Grapevine is an award-winning charity with expertise in helping communities across Coventry and Warwickshire to bring about change and own their futures. Over the last three years we have become field-leaders in doing this through building place-based social movements where hundreds of people work together towards common goals. Our work has three strategic strands:

- Strengthening people
- Sparking community action
- Shifting systemic power



One thread runs through all our work: bringing those who are marginalised into the centre of their communities and helping them get a life like any other.

Our approach is built on 25 years of curiosity, experimentation and observing emerging practices across the world. It has become a nationally acclaimed example of how vulnerable people and communities can meet each other's needs. In 2019 we won the Small Charities Big Impact Award and West Midlands Service Excellence Award.

3. About Connecting for Good

Connecting for Good (CFG) is the name given to a social movement against isolation and marginalisation being sparked, nurtured and grown by Grapevine. Being community-led it can not be 'delivered' per se by us. It is a three year "project" with £720,291 worth of funding from five different funders and employing 4 FTE Community Organisers.

CFG formerly ran 2018-2021. We are seeking an evaluation of its current iteration: 2021-2024.

We have used Community Organising methods to enable local people to respond to their identified challenges, creating new community assets and new community leadership that can keep responding to new challenges or aspirations. The current iteration also has a focus on trying to address systemic failings and causes as well as involving other organisations and sectors.

We have three outcomes to enable:

Outcome one

Coventry is a more inclusive place for people who were previously isolated. Indicators of outcome: 500 isolated/marginalised people leading CfG initiatives; increases in 1000 people's natural networks of support.

Outcome two

500 local people have skills and confidence to lead CFG initiatives. Indicators: 35+ new anti-isolation initiatives happening, self-sustaining.

Outcome three

Organisations from all sectors are collaborating with each other and people from communities in ways that shift the deeper causes of isolation



We have a new online survey (from Sept 23) which uses SWEMWBS across all of our programmes. Additionally, for this programme, we ask participants about their confidence to organise people to act on issues/campaigns, and there are three bespoke questions that seek to measure changes in shared leadership capacity.

None of the content/projects was predetermined for CFG. Everything that has been created has come from people and communities. CFG's activity includes Community Organisers, who listen to people in a range of spaces (group/public/1:1 conversations) to identify willingness to act and to lead change (appetite/capacity/time). People then gather around what is heard, and 'cut' an issue - something that has been shared, is felt to be urgent, that people want to take issue on, and that is deemed both worthwhile and winnable.

Core teams then decide on actions or initiatives that could lead to change, and potentially systemic change. There are 25-35 community led initiatives against isolation and marginalisation so far created or in progress. Seven of these are aiming for a level of systemic change.

We have included pen portraits of some of these initiatives at the end of this document.

As part of the infrastructure of the programme, we have Collaboration Station – a bi-monthly engine room for identifying and growing community support for resident-owned priorities for action; and Changemaker University - a community leadership programme.

Scope of work

Aim of the evaluation

To harness what has been learnt during the CfG programme, and apply it to generate future impact.

Evaluation questions

- A. What is an effective process for defining **meaningful** and **democratic** outcomes and related indicators for a programme that is community led, and focused on systems change?
- B. Drawing on (A), what change has happened as a result of the CfG programme? (we are looking beyond outputs - although we would like these - towards outcomes, such as individuals having improved confidence to act, greater connectedness, groups having more diverse participants, being confident to act and lead, becoming more self-sustaining, greater local visibility, credibility and influence).



- C. What is the sustainability and long-term legacy of the programme? Including what do we know about what CfG needs to sustain itself long-term (beyond the funding term), and what (if anything) is the role of Grapevine within the CfG 'ecosystem'.
- And, beyond the locality of CfG,*
- D. What elements of the CfG model and methodology are different to other movement building and system change initiatives? How can others learn from and apply what has been learnt to inform their work to solve salient and deep-rooted problems, elsewhere?
- E. To what extent, and how, have the CfG team helped to develop the wider 'transformative networks' field of practice, through their membership of and involvement in [Better Way Network](#), [The Relationships Project](#) and [Social Care Future](#) and through their active dissemination of learning?

We are open to proposals that propose non-traditional evaluative methods in response to these questions. We will have a range of audiences for your findings, from people involved with the project, funders, others working in this field of practice. We are hoping that the evaluation will be an enriching process. It needs to provide robust evidence of impact; and also stimulate thinking and inspire future projects to build on our learning. We anticipate using findings from the interim report to help us to explore and generate further funding for this work, as well as to inform practice.

We also invite your consideration of the following as you consider developing a proposal:

- Impact measurement focuses on change and this is important to Connecting for Good. But sometimes a situation remaining the same or becoming stable can be a sign of impact too. We therefore welcome your consideration of whether a **counterfactual** is needed/possible for this evaluation.
- We want to understand what has meaning to people and communities in Coventry and for those funding the work. We would therefore like this evaluation process to have an **open and reflective aspect**, considering questions relating to diversification of perspective and control, including: who gets to decide what is researched and how?; who decides what gets counted as a measure of change or impact; what counts as evidence of something working or not working?
- We would like to understand the **longer-term impact** (if any) of the programme, but recognise the difficulty of building in longer-term tracking of participants.



Deliverables

The contractor will be expected to deliver the following outputs:

- Evaluation framework (mid December 2023)
- Interim report (March 2024) **significant milestone as we look for robust evidence of impact for funding bids*
- Final report (June 2024) with recommendations for embedding ongoing indicators of impact and engaging summary

We're committed to communicating our impact in a way that is accessible to people living in Coventry and Warwickshire and would like outputs to be written in a non-technical and engaging way.

Data

To support this evaluation, the contractor will have access to the following documents and datasets:

- Programme bid and set-up documentation
- Internal reports
- Data from our outcomes survey (data gathered from Sept 2023)
- Weeknotes (<https://www.thecatalyst.org.uk/resource-articles/weeknotes>)
- Published blogs (<https://medium.com/grapevine-cov-warks-community-organisers>)

Working with us

We have monthly face-to-face CFG team meetings in Coventry which we would like you to be part of. We will be responsive to any input you require during the evaluation.

4. Timescales

| Action | Date |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| ITT issued | 1 September 2023 |
| Questions invited by | 5pm, Monday 18 September |
| Response to questions | By Monday, 25 September |
| Deadline for tenders | Noon, Friday 6 October 2023 |
| Interview | 17 or 18 October 2023 |
| Decision | By 20 October 2023 |
| Contracts issued | By 30 October |



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|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Project start/inception | 1 November |
| Evaluation framework | Proposed by mid December |
| Interim report | Signed off by March 2024 |
| Evaluation completion | June 2024 |

5. Budget

The budget for this evaluation is £15,000 including VAT where applicable.

Payment schedule is proposed as 25% of receipt of signed contract; 50% on sign-off of interim report; 25% on project completion.

6. Intellectual property

The ownership of the evaluation material, including the interim report, final report and any data produced lies with Grapevine.

7. Tendering requirements and process

In your proposal, please include:

- A proposed approach that responds to the evaluation aims and questions in this document
- An outline delivery plan (activities, phases of work, milestones, by date)
- Information on how evaluative data will be gathered, analysed and stored
- The name of the lead contractor
- Relevant experience of the individual/teams
- Detailed breakdown of costs to include:
 - Fees for staff involved (including number of days/cost per day for each)
 - Other anticipated expenses and costs (with detail)
 - Overheads (if charged)
- A summary of any risks identified at this stage
- Two referees (at least one of whom should be a previous evaluation client)

Please raise any questions via email by **5pm on Monday 18 September**. Responses to questions will be shared with all bidders who have made contact with us to indicate their interest in submitting a proposal.

The deadline for proposals is **noon, Friday 6 October 2023**.



Contact for further information:

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or

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CFG Pen Portraits

Survivor Sanctuary: Peer to peer support for victim-survivors who have experienced sexual violence, getting a seat at the decision making table. Work with systems and organisations to reform the experience for survivors of the reporting process and the accessibility of specialised support.

Forward fathers: a men's mental health and support network interested in Dad's rights and court process wanting a clear pathway of holistic support for men (Dads) with experience of separation from their family.

Destination Ball Hill: We are organising this neighbourhood of Coventry to regenerate the area & build a sense of pride through collaboration, sharing of experiences & listening and becoming better advocates for residents' needs and interests.

Coventry Urban Eden: Greening our city for the community. CUE is a collective of local people, committed to promoting and co-creating sustainable green spaces, for the enjoyment and benefit of the residents and visitors to Coventry. Their goal is Increase green space in Cov and transfer ownership of disused land or at least acquire right to use it.

Community Woodland: Outdoor community space collaboratively developed & owned, accessible and open to all, a retreat experience on your doorstep - 'building a village' space in the city for connection and learning around nature.

Cov Cares: developing a strong network of businesses who put connection & belonging at the heart of our high streets

Coventry OutSpoke is Coventry's Queer collective, working to strengthen the city's LGBTQ community with the aim of increasing our visibility and raising our collective voices by leading the change and having fun.

Need The Loo Campaign: a group of local citizens working on a campaign to improve toilet provision in the city centre. Aiming to work with city Centre South developers providing access to facilities, local businesses changing the way they think about access, improved signage and mapping.