

Strengthening Faith Institutions: New programme to boost the capacity of faith groups

Faith communities make a vital contribution to national life: they guide the moral outlook of many, inspire great numbers of people to public service and provide help to those in need. Across the country, people from different faiths are working hard in countless churches, mosques, temples, gurdwaras, synagogues, other faith institutions, and in charities and community groups, to support their local communities.

But institutions of every faith can face challenges. These can come in many forms: engaging with the wider community, establishing strong governance structures or responding to events in their areas. Sometimes places of worship of different faiths might not be aware of others dealing with the same issues just streets apart.

We are looking for an organisation or consortium with the vision, capability and credibility to help strengthen and support faith institutions.

We are commissioning an organisation or consortium to deliver the outcomes below over the years 2015/16 and 2016/17. To be eligible to receive the grant an organisation must be a registered charity or have a charitable purpose.

Interested organisations are invited to an event on 21 January to discuss how this programme can best support groups of all faiths. We will then request bids from organisations or consortia to undertake the work. All documents and information given to those attending the event will also be published online.

Some ideas for what we expect the work to include:

Support for faith institutions facing challenges

This could include recruiting and training Community Engagement Champions from faith communities to help boost leadership and governance in faith institutions.

Sharing best practice: materials and website

This could include setting up a website to share the great work going on in faith organisations around the country and share useful documents such as an exemplar child safeguarding strategy or a guide to establishing youth engagement projects.

Connecting faith with the community

This could include running a small grants programme to support faith institutions to better engage young people and women in a sustainable way.

If you would like to express an interest in attending the event please email integration@communities.gsi.gov.uk with your contact details and confirming your organisation's eligibility for the funding. If you cannot attend we would be happy to hear your thoughts. Please email us at integration@communities.gsi.gov.uk.