



# Ministry of Justice

9 November 2016

## **Whole system approach female offenders grant funding scheme 2016**

### **Specification of Requirements**

#### **Contents**

1. Section 1 - Introduction
2. Section 2 - Summary of Grant Funding
3. Section 3 - Period of Grant Funding
4. Section 4 - Timetable
5. Section 5 - Purpose and Scope of Grant Funding Requirements
6. Section 6 - Eligibility Criteria of Applicants
7. Section 7 - Planned Delivery Outcomes
8. Section 8 - Strategic / Operational Project Plan
9. Section 9 - Project Costs
10. Section 10 - Monitoring and Evaluation
11. Section 11 - Performance Reporting & Responsibilities
12. Section 12 - Information

## **1. Introduction**

The Government wants to encourage and support areas to bring together local agencies (criminal justice, statutory and third sector) to develop a multi-agency approach to address the often complex needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged women in society. It is about using existing resources differently to target support more effectively, avoiding gaps or duplication in service provision, and supporting women to access provision successfully so that they can turn their lives around.

## **2. Summary of Grant Funding**

- 2.1. The Ministry of Justice has a budget of £800k available over the rest of this Parliament (£200k in each of the years 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19, and 2019/2020) to seed fund local areas in England and Wales to develop a multi-agency approach to female offenders and other women with complex needs. The final selection of projects will be made by a panel appointed by the Ministry of Justice, using the evaluation criteria set out in Section 5 below.
- 2.2. Applicant(s) may apply for multi-year funding, which will be weighted to the second year, with a single start-up grant payment in the financial year 2016/17, followed by tapered stage payments. Applications should show the component elements for which funding is sought.
- 2.3. For the purposes of this grant award process, the maximum award will be in the region of £70K per year, inclusive of irreclaimable VAT.
- 2.4. Projects must commence not later than 1 March 2017. All funding must be spent within the financial year that it is allocated. If it becomes apparent that an underspend is likely to occur, applicants must inform the Ministry of Justice. Recipients may be able to carry funding into the financial year 2017/18, subject to any local accounting requirements and agreement by the Ministry of Justice.

## **3. Period of Funding agreement**

- 3.1. The period of the Grant Funding Agreement will be set out in a Grant Offer Letter to successful bidders. Ministry of Justice funding over the grant period will be paid in staged advances during each of the project's financial years.
- 3.2. The Applicant(s) will be expected to submit:-
  - quarterly interim progress reports;
  - following completion of the project, a final report reflecting agreed criteria on the impact of the activities initiated by the grant funding.

The Ministry of Justice reserves the right to require the Applicant(s) to repay all or part of the grant funding at any stage, in the absence of satisfactory evidence of progress against stated outcomes where efforts to resolve issues have failed.

#### 4. Timetable

Proposed timetable and administrative arrangements

Issue Grant funding	9 November 2016
Deadline for Application Submissions	30 January 2017
Evaluation of Applications	Early February 2017
Funding award notification	Mid-February 2017
Interim reports	On 1 April 2017 and quarterly thereafter
Funding end date	Dependent on multi-year funding agreement but in any event by 31 March 2020

The proposed timetable is only a guideline. The Ministry of Justice reserves the right to make any changes it deems necessary to the proposed timetable.

#### 5. Funding Purpose and Scope

##### **Why a Whole System Approach to Female Offenders?**

The aim of a whole system approach to female offenders is to assess a woman's needs at her first contact with the criminal justice system, and to provide holistic support throughout her justice journey. Through early intervention when a woman first comes into contact with the police, we want to divert some low-level offenders out of the justice system, where appropriate, into support to address needs that may be underlying her offending. For other women, we hope that by providing holistic support throughout the offender journey, we will see fewer women serving short custodial sentences, and reoffending.

We recognise that local areas may choose to address the needs of female offenders as part of a wider cohort of women with complex needs. The MoJ is supportive of this approach, which could help to address the needs of women at risk of offending, including women who are assessed as at high risk of re-offending and causing serious harm.

##### **What is the benefit for local areas?**

Women's offending generates significant fiscal, economic and social costs well beyond the direct costs to the Criminal Justice System. Many female offenders and women at risk of offending make repeated demands on public services, whilst others simply fall through gaps in the system. Where they have children, their lifestyles can have an intergenerational impact too.

In a time of diminishing resources, there is a real need for local areas to reduce demand on services and the costs of social problems such as mental health, substance misuse, children in care, victims of crime etc. The WSA model means agencies coming together to use existing resources more effectively, to share information, and to coordinate women's access

to services, improving the chance of successful outcomes. This will have a range of social benefits, including fewer long-term or crisis point demands on services such as health and housing; increased numbers of women in employment/training; more women accessing support for domestic violence; fewer victims of crime; and reductions in the numbers of children taken into care or on the risk register, and truanting from school, resulting in stronger local communities.

## 6. Eligibility Criteria

- 6.1. Applications must be in respect of a project based in England or Wales.
- 6.2. Applications are invited from any organisation(s) able to provide the necessary leadership to develop a WSA in a local area.
- 6.3. Subject to the criteria below being met, applications based on a model that will address the needs of female offenders within a wider cohort of women with complex needs, are welcome.
- 6.4. Applications for the WSA - Female Offenders grant funding must meet **all** of the following 6 criteria. We regret that it is not possible to accept applications that only partially meet the criteria.
  - i. The Application should demonstrate how the project will establish a sustainable multi-agency approach to support female offenders throughout their offender journey, which will enable the delivery of the key aims of the whole system approach, namely:
    - Targeted support for female offenders and those at risk of offending, many of whom are vulnerable and have complex needs
    - Reductions in the reoffending rate of female offenders, including women assessed as high risk;
    - Reductions in the number of women going to court;
    - Reductions in the number of women going to prison on short sentences;
    - Wider social benefits, including reductions in demand on services and the potential impact of chaotic lifestyles on children, through improved outcomes for identified needs amongst this cohort (e.g. domestic violence and sexual abuse; mental and other health issues; substance misuse; accommodation; finance and debt; education/training needs and employment; learning difficulties and disabilities issues).
  - ii. Funding should be used to help unlock further financial investment and other support to establish and embed a whole system approach for female offenders that is scale-able and sustainable.
  - iii. Projects should be transformative in your area (i.e. funding should be used to provide additionality rather than to support current work, unless it will test a new way of working or other new element), and should contribute to early intervention and diversion out of the criminal justice system or custody, where appropriate.
  - iv. Applications should set out how lessons learnt and outcomes for the women supported will be captured and shared with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and other local areas to inform understanding of what works, value for money, and good practice. This should include anonymised examples of case studies, including women in the high risk category, feedback

from stakeholders, and regular updates from routine data collection on women supported by the WSA. Routine data collection should include, at a minimum:

- the number of women referred;
- the number of women who engage
- the characteristics and support needs of women who engage
- the services to which women are referred and the number who engage with these services
- progress/outcomes for women supported against their identified needs, including any needs in the areas of domestic violence and sexual abuse; mental and physical health; substance misuse; accommodation; finance and debt; education/training needs and employment; learning difficulties and disabilities
- And, where applicable, progress/outcomes for their children (e.g. reductions in truanting, prevention of being taken into care).
- For those under statutory community supervision, the risk profile of the women supported to monitor engagement and outcomes for women by risk level, to demonstrate engagement with women at all levels of the risk spectrum.

Ideally, areas should also provide a cost benefit analysis at a future point as part of the lessons learnt feedback to MoJ that is informed by the data collection set out above.

High level support will be made available to grant funded areas from Analysts at MoJ.

- v. Projects must engage with the Ministry of Justice's Justice Data Lab (JDL) to measure the local WSA's impact on proven reoffending, where the JDL team deem this feasible. It takes about 24 months post release from prison/start of a community sentence for reoffending data to become available. (See Information sheet on the Justice Data Lab at Annex A).
- vi. Bids should set out the strength and breadth of local partnerships. They should evidence the ability of the applicant/lead delivery agency to lead development of a multi-agency approach and to gain buy-in from other partners, including the voluntary and community sector, and key statutory partners such as local authorities; health providers; the police; Police & Crime Commissioners; the National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Companies; women's prisons; and Job Centres.

## **7. The planned Delivery Outcomes**

- 7.1. Funded projects should deliver a sustainable, embedded multi-agency service to provide effective support to female offenders throughout their offender journey, and to women at risk of offending, including serious offending, so as to deliver the aims set out at paragraph 5.4.i above. WSA models should identify and address and suggest solutions to barriers to female offenders (and other women with complex needs) from engaging effectively with services, which may include a single needs assessment, sequencing access to services, data sharing between agencies, and shared budgets/outcomes.
- 7.2. Applications should provide learning for MoJ and other areas on setting up and embedding a WSA, to inform understanding of what works, value for money, and good practice.

## **8. Strategic / operational Project plan**

- 8.1. Applicant(s) must provide a high level (one-page) Project Plan for the lifecycle of the project, showing what you plan to achieve for each stage of the project.

## **9. Project costs**

- 9.1. Applicant(s) must supply a summary of the financial costs and resources for each stage of the project. It is suggested that, at minimum, this sets out the different types of cost the project will incur and when these will be incurred by financial quarter.
- 9.2. The Ministry of Justice may seek to recover some or all of the grant, if the Applicant(s) is performing unsatisfactorily or if the project ceases activity. The Ministry of Justice may not require all or part of the grant to be repaid where the reasons for unsatisfactory performance or early cessation of work is beyond the control of the Applicant(s) and reasonably unforeseen by the Applicant(s).

## **10. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- 10.1. Applicant(s) will need to develop and deliver a monitoring and data collection plan in conjunction with the Ministry of Justice that meets the Essential Criteria 5.4.iv and v above.
- 10.2. Ministry of Justice analytic team will host a discussion for potential bidders to discuss expectations on data collection and evaluation, and the support available from the MoJ. Information will also be placed on the WSA Yammer website.

## **11. Performance Reporting & Responsibilities**

The following reporting requirements will be included in the Agreement. The content of the reports to be agreed between the Applicant(s) and the Ministry of Justice.

- 11.1. Applicant(s) must submit quarterly progress reports to the Ministry of Justice, and emerging lessons learned. The progress report at the end of the financial year should take the form of an annual report summarising achievements and learning over the year.
- 11.2. Applicant(s) must submit an annual financial report, setting out how they have used the funding from the Ministry of Justice.
- 11.3. Applicant(s) must produce an end of project evaluation report and a final financial statement.

## **12. Information**

- 12.1 Whilst the MoJ will not enter into negotiation or discussion about bids, we will try to answer questions about the application form and process, and the aims of the grant funding scheme before the closing date for bids to be received. Care will be taken to ensure that all recipients are treated equally and fairly. All questions and answers will be published in an anonymised manner on our WSA Yammer site so they can be viewed by all applicants. Please contact the Female Offender Policy Team on [cjwst@justice.qsi.gov.uk](mailto:cjwst@justice.qsi.gov.uk) if you would like to join this website.

For and on behalf of Ministry of Justice  
Prisons and Offender Management Policy Group,  
Female Offender Policy Team