



HM Revenue
& Customs

HMRC Grant Funding 2015/16

Application guidance

Withdrawn - do not use

1. Introduction

HMRC has £2m funding to allocate in 2015/16 to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to provide advice and support to our customers who need extra help understanding and complying with their obligations and claiming their entitlements.

Category One

In May 2014, HMRC launched its new service for customers who need extra help, following a pilot in the North East of England. Further information on this is at this link: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/extrahelp/index.htm>

HMRC is offering funding in 2015/16 for VCS organisations to complement this new service, specifically to target our hardest to reach customers or those whose relationship with HMRC has broken down, who need independent advice and support or can/will not interact with HMRC for whatever reason.

We are looking for VCS organisations to help these customers to form or rebuild a relationship with HMRC that enables them to engage directly with us in the future.

You can apply for funding up to a maximum of £350,000 per bid in this category. We will only accept one bid per organisation in this category.

Category Two

We are also looking for organisations with the expertise and infrastructure to take referrals by telephone or email from our extra help service. You would be assisting customers who need independent advice and support with more complex tax issues, for example: complex PAYE issues, completion of Self Assessment tax returns - often from incomplete records, claims for Special Relief and appeals. Your organisation would be responsible for bringing individual cases to conclusion. We estimate the number of referrals to your organisation to be no more than 800-1000 per year.

You can apply for funding up to a maximum of £200k per bid in this category. We will only accept one bid per organisation in this category.

2. Timeline

The timeline for the funding round is as follows:

- **31 October 2014** – Deadline for receipt of completed applications
- **Within 3 working days** – Acknowledge receipt of application
- **12 December 2014** – Notification to successful applicants
- **1 April 2015** – Grant agreements in place, new funding begins

3. HMRC's strategic funding aims

If your organisation applies for funding, you will need to demonstrate how your proposals align to and support HMRC's key strategic aims:

- **Customers who need extra help:** Our grant-funding programme focuses on activities aligned to HMRC's customer strategy specifically on those activities that provide advice and support to those customers who, for various reasons, need extra help at some point in their lives when interacting with HMRC.
- **Making it easier for intermediaries,** including those in the VCS, to engage with us on a customer's behalf.
- **Designing services to meet customer needs:** help HMRC identify and reduce barriers for our hard-to-reach and vulnerable customers to improve their customer experience.
- **Efficiency and productivity:** Government is seeking sustainable cost savings across all departments and we need to ensure that we allocate our funding efficiently to achieve the best outcomes for our customers.
- **Digital services:** HMRC's aim is to provide more of our services digitally. We are looking for organisations to support that aim and help our customers with new ways of working.

4. Eligibility criteria

You will need to confirm that you satisfy ALL of the following criteria to be eligible to apply for grant funding from HMRC. If you cannot meet these criteria as a single organisation or as a consortium, then unfortunately you will be unable to bid.

1. You will need to be one of the following types of organisation:

- a registered charity
- a voluntary and community organisation
- social enterprise
- mutual
- co-operative

2. Your organisation must be able to provide an extensive national reach, which means that you must provide advice and support that covers a significant extent of either one or more of the nations of the UK – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Although we are looking for national reach, we encourage partnerships and consortia between local organisations to achieve this.

3. You will need to be able to identify customers who have HMRC-related issues and be competent to help them with one or more HMRC services, for example:

- Tax (PAYE and Self Assessment)
- Working Tax Credits
- Child Tax Credits
- Child Benefit

4. You must have sound and comprehensive financial systems and processes that enable you to track the amount of funding spent throughout the year and demonstrate that you have allocated the funding to the specific activity detailed in your bid.

5. You must have in place an infrastructure for monitoring and evaluating that is capable of reporting agreed outcomes; i.e. the impact on your clients and that your outcomes represent value for money.

6. No aspect of the activity funded by this grant may be party-political in intention, use, or presentation.

7. You may not use the grant to support or promote religious activity.

5. Who we want you to help.

We want the VCS to support HMRC in helping those customers we currently find hardest to reach, or who cannot or will not interact directly with us.

We are aware that some vulnerable/marginalised customer groups may find it difficult to interact with HMRC, for reasons that include geography, culture, language and trust. Some customers will not interact with HMRC because of previous bad experiences or because they need someone to advise independently and act on their behalf.

Your organisation must be able to help HMRC customers in these groups, who also display one or more of the following characteristics:

- They are experiencing difficulties accessing HMRC services, due to illness, disability and/or restricted time availability.
- They lack confidence, and are overly worried about making mistakes or are new to HMRC services.
- They lack the ability to deal with tasks, for example, through learning difficulties, memory problems, lack of language skills to be able to understand the tax system, complex working situations or several income strands.
- They have mental health issues or are suffering extreme distress through life events, such as bereavement or the breakdown of a relationship.

Your proposal will need to show how you can support customers in these groups or any combination of these groups.

We want you to provide advice and support to those customers who need extra help and cannot afford to pay for it from a professional adviser. This support might include face-to-face, telephone advice lines, online services, surgeries and outreach events.

6. Demonstrating Success

HMRC understands that a “one-size fits all” approach is not necessarily appropriate. We also recognise a need for proportionality.

However it is important you are able to demonstrate how you are achieving successful outcomes for your clients - our customers. You should be able to provide clear information and data about the impact of your activities, outline your outcomes and deliverables and detail how you intend to monitor and evaluate them. We are looking for a good return on our investment, so you will need to demonstrate that your services are good value for money.

7. Your Costs

In your application you must provide a financial breakdown of your bid.

You must show the full costs including overheads. You should only include costs directly incurred by the bid activity.

8. Terms/Funding Awards

The terms for funding awards are set out in a Grant Agreement.

If your application is successful we will send you a signed hard copy of the agreement at the end of the selection process. You will need to read, check, sign and return the agreement to secure the funding.

The Grant Agreement will set out an agreed schedule for invoicing and payment.

We will consider advance payments if you make a sound financial case for this.

9. How we will support you.

If your bid is successful we will:

- Allocate you an account manager from the HMRC VCS Stakeholder Team, who will be your first point of contact to discuss the progress of your funded activities.
- Discuss and agree with you, your proposed outcomes and measurement methodology.
- Review the data you collect by commissioning from you a mid and end of year report to evidence your outputs and expected outcomes.
- Monitor invoices to agreed timescales and engage with you to ensure delivery is within the agreed budget.
- We may arrange for HMRC auditors to visit organisations towards the end of the project to analyse the grant spend, and establish that you have spent the funds in accordance with the original bid.

10. Contacts

If you are confident your organisation can provide the service we seek and you satisfy the eligibility criteria as set out at section four above, please email the HMRC VCS Stakeholder Management Team for an application form at:

mailbox.stakeholder@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

If you have any questions about this guidance, please contact

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