

## b-inspired: Enterprise as a Life

Managed in England by the Department for Communities and Local Government, European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) focuses on reducing economic disparities within and between EU member states by supporting economic regeneration and safeguarding jobs. The fund has helped a wide variety of projects from large scale public works to small local initiatives, with over €8billion to be invested in England alone by 2013.

### Project overview

b-inspired is committed to developing successful neighbourhoods, and providing the services and support needed to embrace and nurture talent and potential in Leicester's exciting and diverse communities.

In July 2009, b-inspired received funding for its business support project Enterprise as a Life, which supports individuals from deprived communities in Leicester through workshops, group events, one-to-one coaching and mentoring.

### Project funding

The total project value was £689,000. This was divided into two periods. The first from 1 July 2009 to 31 September 2012 was valued at £295,000, 62% of the funding came from ERDF, 22% from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) and 16% was self-funded. The second period from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2013, was valued at £394,000, 80% was from ERDF, 10% from the WNF and 10% partner and self-funded.

### Hints and tips – the application process

Potential applicants to the ERDF fund should know that the application process can be quite lengthy and applicants should leave sufficient time for this.

### Hints and tips – project management

They would advise working closely with the Department for Communities and Local Government, whose staff they have found helpful and supportive.

Also, historically ERDF projects have not worked closely together. b-inspired would like this to change in order to prevent missed opportunities and to pool resources and shared costs.

### Learning points

The most important lesson b-inspired have learnt is to constantly review and improve their service to meet the needs of their clients. In their case, this has led to them introducing new workshops and a text message service providing updates on forthcoming events.

**For further information on the b-inspired email [www.b-inspired.org.uk](http://www.b-inspired.org.uk).**

**For further information on One East Midlands visit**

**[www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk](http://www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk). For further information on EMFAN visit [www.emfan.org.uk](http://www.emfan.org.uk).**

**For further information on ERDF visit [www.communities.gov.uk/regeneration/regenerationfunding/europeanregionalevelopment](http://www.communities.gov.uk/regeneration/regenerationfunding/europeanregionalevelopment).**