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## **D2N2 Active Engagement Bulletin: March 2019**

Welcome to the March edition of the D2N2 and One East Midlands Active Engagement & Skills bulletin; news, activities and opportunities relating to the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for the VCS and partners. This bulletin is distributed at the start of every month; providing a round-up of recent news and highlighting what's coming up.

For information on the role of LEPs and their relevance to your work please visit the One East Midlands [policy page](#). Information specific to D2N2 can be found [here](#) at One East Midlands or on the D2N2 website at [www.d2n2lep.org](http://www.d2n2lep.org)

If you would like to contact the Rachel Quinn at D2N2 or have items of relevance to this bulletin please contact [Rachel.quinn@d2n2lep.org](mailto:Rachel.quinn@d2n2lep.org) or tel: 07551 124225.

### **Inclusion Governance**

#### **Update from Jane Howson: VCSE representative on the D2N2 Board**

D2N2 Board has not met since my last report – the next being mid-March. However progress has been made on the appointment of new private sector Board members and on the development of the new governance structure.

The role of Inclusion reps within that new structure and a process for recruitment was discussed at length at the last SIEAG meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> February. As boards become formalised you can expect to see a range of engagement opportunities come available – working closely with me to embed an inclusive approach across the work of the LEP. Keep an eye on Rachel's bulletin, the D2N2 website or media channels for alerts or contact me or Rachel if you are interested and would like to know more.

The issue of VCSE engagement was also discussed by SIEAG with agreement of a move towards a 6-monthly open engagement forum with D2N2, supported by a couple of sector-led reference group meetings between forums. More detail on this to be worked up, but in general the new arrangements will strengthen inclusion voice and increase the number and breadth of VCSE organisations that D2N2 engages with. I hope this is a win:win for all and helps continue the proactive and supportive reputation that the sector has built with the LEP.

Lastly, I was very pleased to see our new Chair, Elizabeth Fagan, challenge ESIF Managing authorities on the outcomes and impact of projects and new applications at our recent ESIF Sub-Committee meeting. I think the meeting sent a strong message to projects and the relevant departments and was wholeheartedly supported by the rest of Committee. Great stuff.

Jane Howson



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### **D2N2 Social Inclusion & Equalities Advisory Group (SIEAG)**

The final meeting of SIEAG was held on 27<sup>th</sup> February to discuss forward arrangements once the structure disbands. The meeting agreed a role description for new Inclusion representatives on all D2N2 structures, an accountable recruitment process and a mechanism for future VCSE engagement (both via governance and more widely).

A VCSE sector-led reference group is now likely to form specifically to shape VCSE relationships with the LEP and provide a mechanism for accountability. The group will be 'light touch' and probably drawn from existing SIEAG members at the outset. Anyone interested in supporting the work of the reference group or engaging in the future 6-monthly forums can register interest via [sandra.casey@d2n2lep.org](mailto:sandra.casey@d2n2lep.org)

Minutes of the last SIEAG meetings and dates for the next 2 engagement forums will be circulated in the April bulletin.

### **D2N2 Building Better Opportunities Stakeholder Managers' bulletin**

The second D2N2 BBO Stakeholder Managers' bulletin is live – read the bulletin and sign up to receive it direct by following the link below:

[Building Better Opportunities Stakeholder Manager's February 2019 newsletter](#)

### **ESIF Programme Updates**

#### **Open calls: ESF**

There are no current ESF calls open in D2N2.

D2N2 ESIF Coordinator, Richard Kirkland, is currently in discussions with the Managing Authorities for both ESF and ERDF to discuss call scheduling for unallocated ESIF funds. This work will be primarily focussed with DWP to target the higher proportion of uncommitted ESF still available. To find out more please contact [Richard.kirkland@d2n2lep.org](mailto:Richard.kirkland@d2n2lep.org)

#### **Open calls: ERDF**

One call under the Nottingham Sustainable Urban Development Programme is currently open.

This call is looking to enhance access to, and use and quality of, Information and Communications Technology; enhance the competitiveness of small and medium sized enterprises; and support the shift towards a low carbon economy.



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Projects put forward under this call must cover the Nottingham Sustainable Urban Development strategy area including Nottingham, Broxtowe, and parts of Ashfield, Gedling and Rushcliffe. Deadline for submission is 26<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

For more information and to find links to the Nottingham SUD Strategy please visit the [D2N2 TA Website](#).

### **ESIF Reserve Fund – plans under development**

ESIF Managing Authorities are currently putting in place plans for an ESIF Reserve Fund; to maximise use of uncommitted ESIF funds in the final phase of the 2014-20 programming period.

Plans are still under development but in summary the purpose of this fund will be to actively manage any underspend in a coordinated way. What we know so far is:

- The funds will be nationally managed but with priority given to geographical areas where commitment has been under-achieved and to thematic objectives which are under-committed.
- Funds will be made available within Priority Axis but not specific to individual Investment Priorities – improving flexibility of use.
- The funds will be used to maximise the achievement of outputs and results and will draw on management information and evaluation data to identify best value for money and delivery methods in achieving results.
- No specific cut off deadline is being set for ‘claw back’ of local funds but broadly this will be done in negotiation with LEP areas over Autumn 2019.

In D2N2 our priority is to maximise use of our existing allocation (avoiding claw back if at all possible) and consider how additional investment through the Reserve Fund might aid the achievement of priorities or shortfalls from our ESIF Strategy. We will keep you informed as this progresses.

### **GOV.UK and ESIF Action Note Updates**

Visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-2014-to-2020-european-structural-and-investment-funds> for news and updates.



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## **ESF Provider ‘Working Links’ into administration**

A national ESF Employment and Skills provider, and provider of the INSPIRE LOCAL project in D2N2, Working Links, has announced that it has gone into administration. See [letter from DWP](#) for details.

In D2N2 this flagship project, with a particular focus on supporting individuals with health-related barriers to employment, was drawing to a close and was not due to be extended. However, the LEP remains concerned that any individuals receiving support through the project should continue to do so. Providers currently delivering related services are requested by the LEP to consider how they could assist in ensuring continuity of support for any individuals affected and to make their capacity to do so known to the LEP (via [Richard.kirkland@d2n2lep.org](mailto:Richard.kirkland@d2n2lep.org)) and/or through the ESFA.

## **Other News**

### **Public Health England launch ‘*Health Matters*’ health and work blog**

PHE have published a blog drawing together all the materials developed so far as a result of focus on ‘work and health’. The blog details the contribution that employers, local authorities and the NHS can all do for this agenda and draws together useful tools and resources gathered so far.

Read the blog [here](#)

### **ONS publishes guidance for measuring loneliness**

The Office for National Statistics has now [published its detailed recommendations](#) on how to measure loneliness, including the first tranche of government surveys that will be adopting the measure.

The work responds to the Prime Minister’s commitment in January to establish indicators of loneliness across all ages and work to build the evidence base on loneliness. The work includes specific research delivered jointly with the Children’s Society on how [children experience loneliness](#).

The research shows that:

- 11.3% of children said that they were “often” lonely
- Children who reported “low” satisfaction with their health said they “often” felt lonely (28.3%)
- 27.5% of children who received free school meals said they were “often” lonely, compared with 5.5% of those who did not



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## **VCSEs: a bidder's guide to working with government**

The Office for Civil Society, with support from the Cabinet Office has written a guide for voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations considering selling to central and local government or becoming part of the supply chain for delivering public services.

The guide, commissioned by the VCSE Crown Representative, Claire Dove OBE, supports organisations to understand the market, assess their options, find opportunities and bid for contracts. [Read the guide here.](#)

You can also follow the [VCSE Crown Representative on Twitter](#) for the latest updates.

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