

STEPS TO SUSTAINABILITY – FAQ'S

Who can apply?

- This is an opportunity for small and medium heritage organisations where all of the learning and resources, plus the £10,000 funding will have a huge impact. Large development bodies or large funding organisations are not eligible.
- Organisations which are charities, social enterprise, trust, local authority, CIC, SCIO, company ltd by guarantee are all eligible to apply. If you are not in these categories please contact us to discuss.
- We want to hear from all types of heritage organisations – community heritage, collections, buildings & monuments, nature & environment, landscapes, industrial, maritime, transport, culture.

Which round can I join?

- Round 1 is now in delivery - we invited applications from organisations based in **Scotland, NE England, Yorkshire, North West England, Midlands and Wales** to apply and there are currently 28 organisations participating.
- In **Round 2**, which is now open for applications (deadline 23rd July, to start in September) we are inviting organisations from **England, Wales and Northern Ireland** to apply. We will also deliver one programme in **Scottish Gaelic medium** for anyone who has this preference. We are looking for approximately 30 organisations in total, from a diverse range of heritage sectors and new business ideas to participate.

What is expected of me by taking part on this programme?

- That you are able to commit to all of the programme dates in the schedule and that you will come prepared to develop your income generating idea further through participation and learning with your fellow participants. That you will be prepared to share and learn from each other, but also to have fun along the way and make some great new connections.

15months seems very long, what will I be committing to?

- The first stage, lasting approximately 6 months, comprises 5 ½ days of facilitated sessions plus the option to join webinars, masterclass, virtual study tours and heritage café connect sessions to support you to prepare for, build and embed sustainability. After you have unlocked your first funding payment through presenting to a panel, at the end of this first stage, you will implement, test and develop your new business idea in your workplace. This period of 9 months, will be supported with coaching or business mentoring and the option to drop in to further webinars. At the end of this time, you might request further interventions to support your idea further and to secure the remainder of the funding award. Please note that some sessions are a couple of hours and others are full days, the amount of contact time over the 6 months is not onerous.

What types of income generating ideas do you expect to see?

- We are open to your suggestions and don't want to prescribe but the idea needs to be agreed within your organisation as you will be implementing the idea in the latter stages of the programme. This could be creating or improving your retail /cafe offer, developing an outside space, redeveloping a disused space, offering your facilities for events or linking with external organisations to provide a service. There are very little limitations on what you can do but the idea needs to generate income and have enough shape for you to be able to use it as a working example throughout the programme, as you will have the support to grow your idea into a reality. Please see case studies on our website for inspiration!

I have a new business idea but I don't have any financial projections or a business plan, can I still apply?

- We are excited to hear about your business idea and why you think this is right for your organisation to pursue with any supporting evidence you might have. Financial projections and/or a business plan are not required. Please tell us as much as you can on the application form.

I have a new business idea that I haven't told anyone in my organisation about yet, can I still apply?

- We are ideally looking for two people from each organisation to attend so the business idea should be a collaborative effort to ensure the best chance of success. Share your idea with someone in your organisation who can sign off your attendance and complete the application form together. Your organisation needs to be supportive of your idea as you will be implementing this in the latter stages of the programme.

I don't have the support or backing of my organisations board can I still apply?

- We are ideally looking for two people from each organisation to attend and if that is not possible, that there is full support from the board for one member of staff to attend. If you don't have the support of your board to attend, this will impact on the success of your application. The Board will need to be in support of your income generating idea.

I have the support of my organisations board but they are not in a position to free someone else up to participate, can I still apply?

- We are ideally looking for two people from each organisation to attend and if that is not possible, that the board provide their full support for one member of staff to attend. We will be looking for a trustee to provide a statement on the application form to detail how you will ensure the best chance of success.

I don't know what my circumstances will be in the short to medium term, can I still apply?

- We understand that these are unpredictable and challenging times and that uncertainty across the sector is common. If you feel that attendance on this programme will create a better chance of success for your organisation we would welcome you to apply. Please be honest in your application about the challenges facing your organisation and the opportunities that a new income generating idea could present.

How will our organisation access the funding of up to £10,000?

- There are two stages to unlock the funding of up to £10,000 per organisation. Following attendance during the first stage, you will be asked to present your developed business idea to request a start-up amount (this could be up to or near to £5,000) before being awarded the balance after your implementation and development stage.

How will we access the coaching/mentoring?

- You will be allocated a coach or business mentor, depending on your needs, who will schedule in 4 sessions with you and your co-worker following your first round of funding.

Will I only participate with my group throughout the programme?

- There will be a number of opportunities for you to mix with the other groups as we are keen to share experiences of peers as much as possible across the UK.

Will the people delivering this programme understand the heritage sector?

- Yes, we have a range of facilitators who have delivered to museum and heritage organisations before and we are also engaging heritage sector leaders as guest speakers and to participate in panel sessions.

Why do you need the supporting documents as part of the application?

- These documents will help with assessing applications to this programme to ensure that your organisation is properly constituted. If you have trouble with providing these documents please email <mailto:stos@socialenterprise.academy>

Why is there a participation fee of £50 per person?

- In our experience, levying a nominal fee for participation supports levels of commitment amongst participants. An organisation should see the value in investing a small amount of money for a much larger return, in terms of learning and development to support their organisations sustainability, as well having access of up to £10,000 in funding. The market value of this programme is in excess of £2000 per person.