

Sheffield Social Enterprise Network (SSEN)

Business Development

Tender Specification

Background to SSEN

Sheffield Social Enterprise Network (SSEN) is an unincorporated member-led network for Sheffield-based social enterprises, social entrepreneurs or those involved in supporting them. SSEN members believe that they are better able to grow, prosper and deliver their chosen social impact, by electing to participate in a common network, established to enable them to support each other in...

“Making Connections, Becoming Better Informed, Sharing Experiences, and enjoying a Stronger Voice”

SSEN is founded on these four pillars, and shall always be governed by, and in the interests of, its members. A new Management Committee was formally elected at an AGM on 4 February 2015.

Membership

Membership is open to anyone who falls within the defined groups, namely Sheffield-based social enterprises, social entrepreneurs or those involved in supporting them.

Management committee

Management committee members are elected annually by the membership.

Chair:	Caron Walton, The Key Fund
Vice-Chair and Governance Officer:	Colette Wymer, The Key Fund
Secretary:	Jon Johnson, Strip the Willow
Events Officer:	Claire Collister, Sheffield Hallam Students' Union
Networks & Events Officer:	Darren Chouings, University of Sheffield Enterprise
Operations & Communications Officer:	Laura H Bennett, Tech North

Values

SSEN aims to improve the social impact of social enterprise in Sheffield. It will achieve this by providing a common network, which members (being Sheffield-based social enterprises, social entrepreneurs or those involved in supporting them) can participate in, in order to grow, prosper and support each other. SSEN's mission is to enable social enterprises to "Achieve Greater Social Impact through Making Connections, Becoming Better Informed, Sharing Experiences, and Leveraging a Stronger Collective Voice"

SSEN's values

1. A commitment to equal opportunities and will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age.
2. A commitment to strengthening the social enterprise sector in Sheffield through active participation in SSEN, building partnerships, being open and honest, and championing the value and impact of social enterprise.
3. A commitment to influence changes in the external environment.
4. A commitment to be flexible in the nature of the activities in order to meet the needs of the members, ensuring that activities are responsive to the needs, desires and strategic interests of the membership, with priority given to the needs of social entrepreneurs in Sheffield.
5. A commitment to sustainability whilst keeping costs to a minimum to ensure that participation in the network is not restricted by financial means.
6. A commitment to respecting and valuing the diverse interests, and forms of working, that exists within the SSEN.
7. A commitment to harnessing the innovative, creative, positive, inspiring and passionate nature of the social enterprise sector.

Ideas and activities

In the context of declining resources in the third sector SSEN has identified a need for organisations to explore their enterprise potential, improve partnership working, and explore the feasibility of new forms of finance, such as social investment.

Activities include:

- Hosting meetings to share expertise and best practice on an identified topic; guest speakers, member presentations, workshops and networking (physical and virtual).
- Providing a point of contact for members to access information and guidance about support available within the sector – signposting, linking members, identifying opportunities.
- Sharing information virtually via newsletters, e-shots and website pages.
- Arranging social events to bring social entrepreneurs (and support organisations) together to learn from each other and access support from peers and organisations.

- Championing the social enterprise sector to influence the ecosystem in which the social enterprises sector operates to ensure it is as conducive to success and sustainability as possible.

SSEN successfully won an “Awards for All” application for £10,000 to develop the network. These funds are designated to improve communications, organise an events programme, develop organisational infrastructure and ensure capacity building for future sustainability.

Relationships

SSEN has developed good relationships across all sectors including the Royal Society of the Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA), both universities within Sheffield, business leaders, public sector, academics, social investors, business support agencies, funders and social enterprise support programmes.

Future Plans

- Quarterly knowledge-sharing events in which we bring together SSEN members to share experiences, discuss challenges, and collaborate to strengthen the sector across the city.
- Repository of “SSEN-approved” resources for all those establishing or scaling up a social enterprise.
- Engagement to link the local council with the network to build an understanding of the value of the social enterprise sector and to inform and influence local policy. Network members can assist local government in facilitating partnerships and advising on sectoral issues. Network members will benefit from having a clearer understanding of local policy decisions, creating a more collaborative environment.
- An annual “Social Enterprise in Sheffield” one-day conference, bringing in external speakers and showcasing social enterprises within the city.
- Achieve recognition for Sheffield as a ‘social enterprise place’ via Social Enterprise UK.
- Link SSEN to local, regional and national networks for scale and a stronger voice whilst retaining local identity and perspective and seeking local opportunities.
- Provide a communication infrastructure, sharing knowledge, skills and resources. Provide a physical and virtual space for advice and signposting, and access to resources.
- Potential for an advice offer – a one-stop shop for social enterprises whilst complimenting and collaborating with other providers.
- Social Enterprise Places - make Sheffield a recognised social enterprise city.

- Potentially expanding SSEN across the Sheffield City Region.
- Local support for national campaigns i.e. Social Saturday.
- Devolution - embed social enterprise in regional plans and local government decision-making processes.

Project Brief

SSEN requires a consultant to help the network become a sustainable entity beyond the end of the current Awards for All grant which ends on 31.03.2016. This piece of work is fundamental to develop SSEN's strategy for the medium and long-term.

The main areas of work:

- Work with SSEN management committee and its members to understand its circumstances, problems and opportunities.
- Develop a tender/funding resource (key information that SSEN can use to input directly into funding/tender bids).
- Scope the external environment on a fortnightly basis for business opportunities including:
 - Funding opportunities
 - Tender and contract opportunities
- Register SSEN with key contract opportunity websites, mailing lists and newsletters.
- Identify and evaluate potential income-generating services and projects that SSEN could develop (short term and long term).
- Identify, and provide synopses of, key policies that affect SSEN currently and potentially in the future.
- Identify key events, conferences and networks that SSEN should align with, attend or formulate relationships with.
- Identify and evaluate the benefits of SSEN aligning with specific strategic bodies. Provide appropriate pitches for SSEN to approach those specific strategic bodies.
- Contribute to SSEN's long term strategy.
- Write funding and tender bids with the support of management committee members.
- Identify and appraise a range of options to improve SSEN's membership offer. This includes leading on the development and implementation of the selected option.
- Research other similar networks to:
 - Provide learning from those networks that could benefit SSEN
 - Appraise those networks with a view to potentially collaborate or associate
- Undertake an appraisal of SSEN's marketing, social media and relationship development channels and provide recommendations on improving SSEN's communications with its members and non-members

- Help to promote SSEN as a leading organisation for supporting social enterprises to key stakeholders.

Knowledge, skills and experience:

- Knowledge of social enterprises and how they sit in the business and political arena, nationally and locally.
- Track record in writing successful funding/tender bids.
- Coordination skills.
- Marketing communications experience.
- Experience of using business development tools.
- Research and analysis skills.
- Membership development.
- Strategic planning experience.
- Report writing.
- Attention to detail.
- Excellent at communicating and networking.

Outcome

The successful consultant will be required to produce and submit a final report at the end of the period with recommendations for the future sustainability of SSEN. The report will be required to be submitted as a PDF document emailed to each committee member and six printed hard copies.

Resources that will be made available to the successful consultant

- SSEN constitution
- Historical background to SSEN
- Awards for All application
- Previous financial support (Royal Society of the Arts, Manufactures and Commerce)
- Promotion material
- Information about SSEN members
- Strategic links
- Management committee members to support funding and tender bid writing

Work Timetable

It is proposed that work will commence on Monday 23 November 2015 and anticipated to be completed by 22 March 2016. There will be monthly reviews undertaken to assess how work is progressing. Reporting procedures, communication channels and breakdown of work will be outlined in a service level agreement.

Additional Information

- This is an urgent project requiring dedicated time between November 2015 and March 2016 to seek finance to sustain the network beyond 31 March 2016.
- The consultant is required to attend SSEN events.
- The consultant will be expected to liaise with Caron Walton the Chair of SSEN who will be the main contact during the work.
- The consultant is expected to meet with the management committee on commencement of the work and to submit monthly reports to the management committee (a schedule will be outlined in the service level agreement).
- The management committee members are individually connected to a range of networks and partner organisations. The consultant is not expected to develop partnerships on behalf of SSEN, however, the consultant is expected to, where relevant and beneficial, suggest potential partnership opportunities that they find.

Proposal Requirements

In your tender proposal please provide details of the following:

- Your understanding of the work
- Your approach to the work
- What key areas your work will cover
- Experience of similar work (and examples)
- Budget inclusive of fees and expenses
- Two references
- CV's of staff to work on the project

Your tender should be submitted as a PDF document via email to hello@ssen.org.uk. In the subject header of your email state "SSEN Business Development Tender Submission". You may attach CV's of staff and budget but no additional marketing/promotional material.

Timescales

Tender advertised	30.10.2015
Deadline for return of tender proposals	10.11.2015 at 12 noon
Tenders assessed by the SSEN management committee	13.11.2015
Interviews	(tbc)
Successful tenderer notified	19.11.2015
Service level agreement signed	23.11.2015
Project start date	23.11.2015

You should submit your tender proposal to hello@ssen.org.uk no later than 12 noon on Tuesday 10 November 2015.

Budget

The proposed budget for this work is £3600 inclusive of VAT and inclusive of any travel or other expenditure incurred by the work undertaken. This is part of the Lottery grant and not negotiable.

Payment is split over the period 23 November 2015 to 22 March 2016 paid over four monthly instalments of £900 per instalment based on satisfactory outcome to monthly reviews of the work undertaken. The successful tenderer will be required to submit monthly reports using a pro forma supplied by the SSEN management committee and a final end of project report.