M&S community business challenge - Liverpool
Applicant Guidance

August 2018
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About this guidance

This guidance will help you to decide whether the M&S Community Business Challenge: Liverpool programme is right for you. It includes information about the types of projects that M&S Community Business Challenge: Liverpool programme is designed to support, as well as the criteria that will be used to assess applications.

The guidance also provides information that will help you to complete the application form.

Part one: Explores the criteria and will help you to decide whether M&S Community Business Challenge: Liverpool Programme is right for you.

Part two: Provides information about the support and grant opportunity available

Part three: Provides information about how to apply and the showcase event.

Please read through this guidance thoroughly to understand whether your organisation’s project fits the criteria, before deciding whether or not to submit an application.

We seek to be a genuinely inclusive organisation by advancing equality and diversity through our policies and practices.

We encourage and welcome applications from people from all backgrounds who are looking to make a real difference to the lives of their local communities.
Introduction
About this programme

The M&S Community Business Challenge: Liverpool is a partnership between Power to Change and M&S designed to bring skilled volunteers from M&S together with funding from Power to Change to the community business sector, and to make the most of M&S’s brand visibility to build awareness of the community business sector. This exciting new partnership programme is being piloted in Liverpool City Region in 2018-19.

Community businesses revive local assets, protect the services people rely on, and address local needs.

Power to Change
Power to Change is an independent trust, whose funding is used to strengthen community businesses across England. At a time when many parts of the UK face cuts, neglect and social problems, we are helping local people come together to take control, and make sure their local areas survive and stay vibrant.

No one understands a community better than the people who live there. In many areas, people are already coming together to solve problems for themselves, and our support can help get businesses off the ground which recycle money back into the local area and benefit the whole community.

M&S Plan A Communities
We’ve supported our local communities throughout our 130 year history, because we know that vibrant communities are essential for our success. As David Sieff, a member of the M&S founding family, said: “healthy high streets need healthy backstreets”.

We aim to take a progressive approach to our community engagement. This is reflected in our Plan A commitments on employability, being in touch with the local community, identifying partnership benefits and supporting global communities.

Get in touch

M&S and Power to Change are working with the School for Social Entrepreneurs North West (SSE North West) to deliver the programme in Liverpool City Region.

If you have questions at any point during your application process, you can get in touch for free advice and guidance with SSE North West, the delivery partner for this programme.

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If you need this guidance in large print, braille or an audio transcript, please get in touch with Lisa.
Part One | Can you apply?  
Are you a community business?

To be considered for volunteering support and funding through M&S Community Business Challenge: Liverpool, you must be able to demonstrate how you meet each of the following criteria.

1. Meet Power to Change’s definition of a community business

2. Have a primary area of impact within Liverpool City Region

3. Be an incorporated organisation that has ideally been trading for at least 12 months

4. Be able to demonstrate charitable purpose

5. Be for public benefit

The four key features of a community business

**Locally rooted**  
They are rooted in a particular geographical place. They build on the strengths and assets of that place to address community needs.

**Accountable to local community**  
This can be demonstrated in many ways (e.g. membership structure, ownership, broad range of local trustees) but you must have evidence of regular community input into decision making.

**Trading for the benefit of the local community**  
They have a clear trading model and sell services and products in and around their local area. The way the business is run and the profits it makes are used to deliver local benefit.

**Broad community impact**  
They engage with a variety of different groups in their community and deliver impact against a range of different community needs.

Watch video  
Ronnie talks about how Granby Four Streets is responding to local needs.

Watch video  
Dave and Sangita from Sheffield Live! talk about how local people make decisions about the business.

Watch video  
Clare talks about how the Burton Street Foundation generates income which is reinvested for social benefit.

Watch video  
John from Homebaked talks about the difference the bakery is making in their local community.

Watch an example of what we’ve funded  
In the videos above we ask some of our grantees to explain in their own words how their business meets the four traits of a community business.
Part One | Can you apply?
Are you a community business?

1. Meet Power to Change’s definition of a community business
If you can say yes to all the questions below, then your idea is for a community business.

- **Are you locally rooted?**
  You must be able to demonstrate that your organisation is rooted in a particular geographic place and responds to its needs.

- **Will you be accountable to the local community?**
  Whether through a community share offer, membership, legal structure or regular community consultation, you will give local people real, ongoing decision making power to shape the business.

- **Will you be trading for the benefit of the local community?**
  You are or you aspire to be a business with a clear trading model, selling services or products to people in your local area, with profits used to deliver local benefit. All or part of your income comes from activities like running community transport or selling the produce you grow.

- **Does your business have a broad community impact?**
  Your organisation will benefit the community as a whole, and you can clearly evidence the positive social impact that your activities have on the broader community. It will be inclusive, and give opportunities for people with different abilities and backgrounds to get involved.

Go to [www.powertochange.org.uk](http://www.powertochange.org.uk) to see examples of community businesses we have funded.

2. Be based in Liverpool City Region
M&S Community Business Challenge: Liverpool is being piloted in Liverpool City Region, which is a priority place for M&S and Power to Change. Applicants for this programme must be based in Liverpool City Region – i.e. within the local authority boundaries of the City of Liverpool, Halton, Knowsley, Sefton, St Helens or the Wirral. Projects or organisations based outside of this area aren’t eligible for the programme in its current form.

3. Be an incorporated organisation, that has ideally been trading for at least 12 months
M&S Community Business Challenge: Liverpool Programme cannot support individuals or unincorporated groups such as unincorporated associations. We fund a range of incorporated organisations. Examples include:

- Charitable Incorporated Association
- Community Benefit Society
- Community Interest Company Limited by Shares
- Community Interest Company Limited by Guarantee
- Co-operative Society
- Registered Charity
- Company Limited by Shares
- Company Limited by Guarantee

We strongly prefer organisations that have been trading for at least 12 months. M&S Community Business Challenge: Liverpool Programme welcomes applications from any sector, including organisations that have previously received funding from Power to Change.
Part One | Can you apply?
Other eligibility criteria (cont.)

4. Be able to demonstrate charitable purpose

You must have a charitable purpose at the heart of the project you’re asking us to fund, which meets charitable needs in your community. This does not mean that you have to be a charity as we will fund a variety of legal structures, but we cannot fund projects which don’t further a charitable purpose.

We cannot accept proposals that promote the advancement of religion or that are party political in nature. This does not prevent faith groups from applying for a project which has a charitable purpose other than the advancement of religion.

We also cannot fund local authorities or statutory organisations or services which are regarded as statutory or government provision.

5. Public benefit

For a project to be charitable, it needs to have both a charitable purpose and to be for public benefit. This means that the community business must create benefits for a broad section of your community, including people who are experiencing disadvantage.

If your project is only going to benefit a few people in your community or will only provide benefits to people who aren’t experiencing disadvantage, we may not be able to fund your project.

More info

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CHARITABLE PURPOSE?

You can find more information about charitable purpose on the Charity Commission website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/charitable-purposes/charitable-purposes

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PRIVATE BENEFIT?

Any personal benefits people receive through the community business must be no more than a necessary result or by-product of delivering public benefit. Personal benefits could include financial payments to the owners of a property that an organisation uses or membership benefits. These private benefits need to be incidental in both nature and amount. Returns from community shares are allowable. Find out more: www.gov.uk/government/publications/examples-of-personal-benefit/examples-of-personal-benefit
M&S Community Business Challenge: Liverpool will provide successful applicants with support to help further develop their community business. This will be in the form of skills-based volunteering from M&S staff, combined with up to £10,000 of grant-funding from Power to Change. The aim of this project is to help community businesses develop and grow, and to capitalise on M&S’s brand visibility to help build awareness of what community business can achieve in local communities.

1. Skills-based volunteering from M&S

Business development support from M&S employees from local stores and regional and national headquarters. This support could include the following up to 3.5 days:

- **From Head office department**

  Marketing and Insight
  - **Brand and Marketing** – campaign development, styling and visual merchandising, events and experiential
  - **Media and Digital** - Social Media, Digital Advertising (SEO, Display, Affiliates), Local Marketing, Media planning & buying

  Finance
  - **Insight** – Research, Data analysis, Identifying target customer
  - **Loyalty & CRM** – email development, CRM
  - **Creative & Production** - Editorial (print & online), photography & design, print & production, copywriting

  Governance
  - **Company Secretarial/legal** – share ownership, directors duties, wider legal and regulation compliance.
  - **Board structure and support**, including non-executive director and Trustee recruitment and training
  - **Internal audit**

  IT
  - **Big Data
  - Software Engineering**

  Legal
  - **Employment and commercial**

  Programme Management
  - Support on managing programmes and projects on time and to budget

- **Cost Management** – Advice on costing projects ranging from fitting out stores and offices, to small initiatives
- **Construction Delivery** – Advice on managing a construction or fit out project
- **Facilities Management** – Advice on ongoing maintenance of premise
- **Sustainability** – Advice on sustainability in buildings (including energy and waste management)

HR
- **Performance & Reward** – Remuneration / compensation, recognition, pensions, performance management
- **Talent** – learning and leadership development, recruitment, graduate and apprenticeship recruitment, employee engagement, talent management, wellbeing, diversity and inclusion
- **People Services** – payroll, HR systems, HR policies and process, people analytics
- **Business Partnering** – organisation design, team development, coaching, business change and strategy, employee relations

PR
- **Media Relations
- Positive PR
- Crisis Management**
Part Two | What can you apply for?
About the support (cont.)

**Property**
- **Location Planning** – Advice on stores performance and wider market trends. Using data to help make Property investment decisions
- **Acquisitions and Estate Management** – Advice on acquiring new and managing/disposing of existing premises

**Local Store Leadership**
- Line management, planning/strategy, empowering staff and instilling accountability, coaching, performance management

**Visual Merchandising**
- Making a sales environment look appealing, consistent brand standard, ensure the best stock is in the best place

**Customer Service and experience**
- Ensuring best possible customer experience

**Trading**
- Driving commercial improvement and implementing knowledge of customer and product for trading success

**Hospitality and Food Compliance**
- Food safety, food prep compliance and training, hospitality process

**Fire Health & Safety**

**Employability & Recruitment**
- Interview, CV skills & training

**Cash handling and administration**

**Learning and Development Leadership**

**Team Development**
- Session plans for new teams, existing teams and teams going through change

**Communication/ Collaboration**
- Engaging Presentations

**Commercial thinking**

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### 2. Grant funding

Applicants have the opportunity to apply for a grant of up to £10,000 which can be spent on the business activities which M&S volunteers will be supporting. A maximum of 5 grants will be awarded in Liverpool City Region.

This funding can be used to pay for a range of activities that work alongside M&S’s skills-based volunteering, to support the development and growth of your community business, and community businesses in the local area.

We expect all volunteering to be completed by June 2019.

**Tips for your application**

Please carefully consider the activities that you will be undertaking throughout your funded project, and whether any of them pose a risk to members of your organisation or the public. Remember, risk can take many forms – injury, financial loss, reputational damage, etc.

If you feel that there is a risk from any of these activities, it would be a good idea to consider including this in your project plan and something for which you could request support.
Part Three | Application process

Application and shortlisting

Power to Change is working with the School for Social Entrepreneurs North West to deliver the programme in Liverpool City Region. They will run face-to-face information sessions for you to find out more about the programme, support your application process, and coordinate volunteering activities between M&S and successful applicants.

Before you apply
Before you apply, please read this guidance thoroughly, check you meet the criteria and whether your community business would benefit from 3.5 days of mentoring and support from M&S volunteers.

How to apply
To apply, please register on the Community Business Challenge microsite, and SSE will send you an application form and invite you to an information session.

These face-to-face information sessions are an opportunity for you to ask more questions about the programme and get advice about your application.

If you would like to apply to the programme, you should complete and submit your application form no later than midnight 21 September 2018.

Shortlisting
A judging panel made up of Power to Change and M&S representatives will shortlist applicants by 1 October. If you are shortlisted, you will be required to showcase your project at an event on 1 November at The Florence Institute, Liverpool, at which the judging panel will award M&S volunteering support and Power to Change funding to up to five applicants in front of a live audience. We will work with you to prepare for the event.

If you are not successful in your application for support and funding, we will signpost you to other sources of support if possible.
The showcase event

Public engagement before the event
Whilst ultimately the judging panel will be making the funding decisions on 1 November, the views of your community will count too. If you are shortlisted, we will work with you to create a profile on the programme microsite about your organisation and your project so your community can show their support and explain how your business has impacted them.

If the judges can see that your project has support from local people, then that will give them an important steer. Above all, they will want to see the depth and quality of local engagement with your project.

Showcase event and judging panel
Each shortlisted candidate will be invited to exhibit at the showcase event to raise awareness about your community business and project.

We will also support you to create a two minute video about your project, which will be shown to the judging panel and audience on the day. After that, the judges will ask you questions about your project. They won’t be trying to to catch you out but will want you to bring out the highlights of what you propose to do if you win.

We will work with you to prepare for the event.

If you are successful
If you are one of the five successful applicants chosen by the panel on 1 November, you will receive support from M&S and a grant up to £10,000 from Power to Change in 2019.

Once due diligence is done, you will receive an offer letter with the conditions of your grant. Once this is signed and returned, you will be able to draw down your grant. This will probably take a couple of months.

SSE North West will work with you and with M&S to structure the volunteering support from M&S in a way that best meets your needs as set out in your application form.

M&S volunteers will offer their time between January and June 2019. You must be able to work with M&S volunteers within this time period.

Get in touch

M&S and Power to Change are working with the School for Social Entrepreneurs North West to deliver the programme in Liverpool City Region.

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