



# Bright Ideas Guide

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Welcome to Brightlife and thank you for your interest in Bright Ideas. We hope this guide will help you to turn your Bright Idea into a Brightlife funded project.

## Section 1: The Bright Ideas Process



### Read this guide

This guide will help you understand how Bright Ideas works and whether your idea might be eligible for funding. It also provides information on the application process and how you can get support to apply.



### Complete your application form

Complete and return your form to us. We will acknowledge receipt of your application within five working days of it being received. You can get support from Chester Voluntary Action (CVA) to complete your application (see Section 4: Next Steps). If your application is not complete, it will be returned to you and you will be asked to provide the missing information.



### Brightlife assesses your application

We will look at your application and assess whether your Bright Idea meets our criteria. You will be informed of the outcome within ten working days of us acknowledging receipt of your application. If successful, your application will be accepted and you will progress to the next stage. If not, we will return your application to you and you will be given feedback.



### Bright Ideas Panel

If your application is accepted, you will be invited to attend the next scheduled Bright Ideas Panel (see the Bright Ideas section of our website for panel dates). Our panels meet quarterly and are made up of trained volunteers, who are all aged fifty and over. You will be asked to talk to the panel for 10 minutes about your Bright Idea. The panel will then have the opportunity to ask questions about your idea.



### Panel Decision

The panel will decide whether your Bright Idea can be funded by Brightlife. You will be informed of their decision within ten working days of the panel date. The panel's decision will result in one of the following outcomes:

1. Your Bright Idea is ready to go. You will receive funding from Brightlife and be supported by CVA to get your project up and running.
2. Your Bright Idea needs a bit more work before you are ready to begin. You will be invited to work with CVA to further develop your idea and your project. If you complete all the necessary development work, you will be funded.
3. We are unable to fund your Bright Idea. You will be informed why and given feedback to help you in the future.

## Section 2: About Brightlife and Bright Ideas

### Brightlife

Brightlife is funded by the Big Lottery until March 2020 to test methods of reducing social isolation in Cheshire West and Chester. It is one of fourteen 'Ageing Better' projects across the UK exploring innovative ways to identify and engage with people aged over fifty who are socially isolated.

We have funds that we award to groups and organisations to run projects on our behalf. One of the ways that we allocate these funds is through Bright Ideas.

### Bright Ideas

At Brightlife, we know that there are lots of people in our communities with good ideas about how to reduce isolation and loneliness for people over fifty. Bright Ideas is an opportunity to turn these ideas into reality.

Community groups and organisations can apply for any amount between £5,000 and £20,000 to fund a project of up to 18 months in length.

In order to get funded, your idea will need to tick all the boxes on our Bright Ideas Checklist:

- Will your Bright Idea cost between £5,000 and £20,000?
- Will your Bright Idea reach out to and help people that you are not currently working with?
- Will your Bright Idea be able to carry on in some form when Brightlife's funding comes to an end?
- Will you be able to commit to Brightlife's evaluation processes?

The following section tells you more about each item on the list and what you will need to do in order to make sure you can tick them all.

## Section 3: The Bright Ideas Checklist

### Will your Bright Idea cost between £5,000 and £20,000?

We will only fund Bright Ideas that cost between £5,000 and £20,000, so you will need to think carefully about how much it will cost to put your idea into practice. You will also need to consider the time period that you would like the funding to cover. Brightlife will fund a Bright Idea for a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 18 months. After the funding finishes, you will need to be sure you can still run the project in some way.

### Will your Bright Idea reach out to and help people that you are not currently working with?

We're looking for services and activities that will reach new people aged fifty and over in order to help them overcome isolation and loneliness. You will need to think about how you will find these people and how you will let them know about your project and encourage them to take part. Bright Ideas funding is not for groups or organisations to continue running existing projects for people they are already working with.

### Will your Bright Idea be able to carry on in some form when Brightlife's funding comes to an end?

All the projects that Brightlife funds should aim to be sustainable. That means they are able to carry on in some form and continue helping isolated people once our funding finishes. You could use one or more of the following methods to make your project sustainable:

- Encourage and support some of the people who take part in your project to carry it on as volunteers. This has worked well with other projects Brightlife has funded. It allows the work to be sustained, whilst also giving your participants the opportunity to use their skills and experience in a meaningful way.
- Use your group or organisation's own funds. You might have reserves or other funds that you decide you will use to continue some or all of your project activities.
- Charging participants to use the service. This has also worked well with other projects. People are often very happy to contribute to the cost of running a service or activity that they value. If you are going to use this option, we recommend you begin charging from the very beginning of your project, even if it is not the full amount that you intend to charge eventually.
- Seek funds from elsewhere. You might want to continue some parts of your project by using the methods already mentioned, but also use funds from another source to maintain or extend other aspects of it.

This is not an exhaustive list of the ways in which you could make your project sustainable. You will probably have other ideas about how you could achieve this.

## Will you be able to commit to Brightlife's evaluation processes?

Brightlife's evaluation processes consist of the following three elements:

### 1. Test and Learn

Brightlife's main aim is to test ways of reducing isolation and loneliness. We do this by using a 'test and learn' approach to everything we do. This means trying things out, learning from what works and what doesn't and making changes. Brightlife and all the projects it funds use the test and learn approach, so you will need to be prepared to apply this to your project too.

### 2. National Evaluation (Big Lottery)

The Big Lottery are evaluating all fourteen projects that are part of their 'Ageing Better' fund, which includes Brightlife. This involves inviting all the participants on all of our projects to complete a questionnaire. This questionnaire is called the Common Measurement Framework (CMF for short). Participants are invited to complete it when they start working with you and when they finish with your service or activity.

The evaluation will help the Big Lottery, Brightlife and your project to understand who you have worked with and what impact you have had on their lives. We regularly share this information with all of our projects and you will be able to use it to demonstrate your success to other people and future funders.

Please have a look at the CMF, which you will find in the Bright Ideas section of our website. As you will see, it is quite lengthy and asks some searching questions, which call for a certain amount of personal reflection. For these reasons, it isn't something that all participants feel comfortable completing on their own. You will need to make sure you have allocated the time and resources within your project to introduce the questionnaire to your participants and complete it with them if necessary. Please also be aware that some participants may need extra support from you regarding some of the issues raised in the CMF.

### 3. Local Evaluation (University of Chester)

In addition to the national evaluation, we are being evaluated at a local level by the Centre for Ageing Studies at the University of Chester. The university team provide extra evidence about the impact our projects are making. They do this by interviewing participants that have taken part in Brightlife funded services and activities, as well as the people who run these projects. This helps us get a really good understanding of what's worked and why. Again, we will share this information with you so that you can use it to demonstrate success.

In order to be funded by Brightlife you must be able to apply the test and learn approach to your project, encourage and support your participants to complete the CMF, and be willing to work with the University of Chester. You will have access to ongoing advice, support and training from Brightlife and CVA to help you with each of these elements.

## Section 4: Next Steps

Brightlife have a contract with Chester Voluntary Action (CVA) to provide you with free advice and support. This is designed to help you develop your idea, complete the application process and support you in delivering your project.

There are three main ways in which CVA can help:

### 1. Before you complete your application

You can contact CVA at any time to talk about your Bright Idea and find out whether it might be eligible for Brightlife's funding. They will help you think about any development work that is needed before you submit an application.

### 2. During the application process

CVA can support you to complete your application and, if you reach the next stage, prepare for the Bright Ideas Panel.

### 3. Delivering your project

If your Bright Idea is awarded funding, you will be given a package of support from CVA. This package will remain in place for as long as your project is funded by Brightlife and includes help to plan for sustainability.

To get in touch with CVA, please contact Joanne Stanton on **01244 401272** or by email at **[joanne.stanton@chesterva.org.uk](mailto:joanne.stanton@chesterva.org.uk)**

You can also visit their website at **[www.chesterva.org.uk](http://www.chesterva.org.uk)**



