

The future of local communities

Invitation to tender

Overview

Local Trust would like to commission a horizon scan to produce a resource bank of ‘future factors’ that may shape the future of place-based communities in England, to help us and others with long-term planning.

About Local Trust

Local Trust was established in 2012 to deliver Big Local, a National Lottery Community Fund-funded programme which committed £1m each to 150 neighbourhoods across England. The £217m originally provided by The National Lottery Community Fund to support this programme is the largest single-purpose Lottery-funded endowment ever made, and the biggest ever investment by a non-state funder in place-based, resident-led change.

In terms of scale, time horizon and ethos, nothing like Big Local has ever existed. Designed from the outset to be radically different from other funding programmes, at the heart of Big Local is a vision of empowered, resilient, dynamic, asset-rich communities making their own decisions on what is best for their area.

Typically the communities we work with tend to be more deprived than the average across England. Most, prior to Big Local, haven’t received their fair share of funding from the National Lottery or from government. A map of where we work is available on our website.

Our belief is that there is a need to put more power, resources and decision-making into the hands of people living in local communities, to enable them to transform and improve their lives and the places where they live.

We do this by trusting local people. Our aims are to demonstrate the value of long term, unconditional, resident-led funding through our work supporting local communities make their areas better places to live, and to draw on the learning from our work to promote a wider transformation in the way policy makers, funders and others engage with communities and place.

In practice, we are:

- Supporting Big Local partnerships to achieve their ambitions
- Delivering and commissioning great research, evaluation, analysis and storytelling from Big Local, and using this to influence and inform policy and practice nationally and locally
- Developing new ways to achieve a transformation in the way policy makers, funders and others engage with communities and place.

Background and objectives for this work

Local Trust is in the process of developing its strategy for 2021-6. This will build on our current strategic framework which is available [here](#).

At the same time, the 150 Big Local communities that we fund are beginning to develop their plans for activities leading up to 2026, which marks the end of the programme. These plans will include considerations for sustaining activity and impact in their communities beyond 2026.

We are also seeing a clear increase in interest in the idea of community-led change, within politics, business and across civil society. More and more organisations are seeing the strength of community as critical to their own futures.

We would like to create a resource bank of well-researched ‘future factors’ that may shape the future for place-based communities in England, which Local Trust can use in its strategic conversations, and offer to Big Local communities and the wider world as a tool in their own conversations.

Scope

The geographic focus for this work is England, as that is where Big Local communities are, but we understand that what happens in England is obviously influenced by factors in the rest of the UK, Europe and the world.

Our planning horizon is 2021-2026 and so factors should be relevant to the time period through to 2030, though we understand that many factors of interest will be playing out beyond that period, and we are interested in weak signals of factors that may just be emerging now but may strengthen in the years beyond 2026-30. We would like to understand for each future factor the mixture of challenges and opportunities it may present for communities in the future.

We want to take a systemic approach to understanding the future context for communities, and so the factors presented in the horizon scan should cover social, economic, political, environmental, technological and legislative issues. They should also cover a range of levels as appropriate, from macro-level factors driving change right across the country (such as climate breakdown and the ecological crisis) to micro-level factors directly associated with communities (such as the rise of community enterprise, the loss of community assets or new localised care models in the NHS).

Activities and timelines

We imagine that the activities will include:

1. Scoping meeting and initial brainstorm with Local Trust team
2. Desk-based research to gather Local Trust materials and futures work already conducted in this space
3. In-depth interviews with people with a wide range of perspectives in central and local government, civil society, business, academia and communities including some people from our Big Local communities. Our aim here will be to seek out diverse perspectives and hear new voices.
4. Develop a long-list of future factors
5. Agree shortlist of around 40 – 50 future factors
6. Draft future factors pack
7. Final designed and formatted future factors pack.

We are not developing proprietary material and are therefore keen to be as open and transparent as possible about what we are doing. For example, there may be opportunities to seek input and ideas online, and we would be interested in hearing ideas for how this could add value to the process.

Milestones:

Commission: w/c 26 August 2019

Working draft: w/c 28 October 2019

Final draft: w/c 2 December 2019

The Local Trust team would expect to work very closely with the delivery team, and we would like to conduct some of the in-depth interviews ourselves.

Resources

The trends identified in the Civil Society Futures inquiry [here](#) and for the Future of Community Business project [here](#) will be a very good starting point for research.

Local Trust has also published a range of essays and research that may be useful, including [this](#) action-orientated piece of research, NLGN's 'Community Paradigm' work available [here](#), research by OCSI into the nature of 'left-behind communities' (an early draft is available [here](#) and further data can be made available on commission) and essays that explore the experiences and achievements of different Big Local communities, such as '[Skittled Out](#)', exploring social capital and civic infrastructure, or '[Building Wealth](#)', exploring approaches to local economic development. Local Trust also has some internal documents that can be made available.

Deliverables

The deliverable should be a 'future factors' pack containing around 40 – 50 factors, grouped in an intuitive way, that may shape the future for local place-based communities in England in the years to 2030.

The factors should be explained very clearly, and supported with evidence such as quotes from interviews, data where appropriate, and real world illustrative examples (signals of change). The language should be accessible without sacrificing the quality of information. We would like to understand for each future factor the mixture of challenges and opportunities it may present for communities in the future.

The deliverable should be well designed in an open and inviting format to inspire and excite people. We want to use it in a variety of different contexts and so it should be flexible, and usable online as well as in published format.

The deliverable could be in the form of a deck of cards, though we are open to ideas and suggestions for alternative formats.

Submitting a proposal

Our maximum budget for this is £40,000 including VAT.

Please send a short proposal as a PDF document to James Goodman (James.goodman@Localtrust.org.uk) and Georgie Burr (Georgie.burr@Localtrust.org.uk)

Please include in your proposal either an example of similar work you have done in the past, or a mock-up of your proposed format for a 'future factor'. Please set out the approach you would take including an allocation of time to different tasks.

If you wish to discuss this brief, please either email as above or call Georgie Burr on 0203 5880 579

Please submit your proposal by 4pm on Wednesday 21 August.

Following submission we will schedule online interviews with shortlisted bidders and seek to appoint w/c 26th August.