

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL LOCAL INNOVATION FUND "Doing things differently in neighbourhoods to make better places to live" WARD PROPOSAL FORM													
WARD Northfield, Kings Norton and Weoley	INNOVATION TITLE Smart Works Birmingham												
<p>Innovations have to meet the LIF priorities and add value to the City wide core priorities listed below. (Tick all those that apply)</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; width: 50%;"><u>City Core Priorities</u></th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 50%;"><u>LIF Priorities</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>• Children - a Great City to Grow Up In <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>• Citizens' Independence & Well Being <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Jobs & Skills a great City to succeed in <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>• New approaches to investment <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Housing a great City to live in <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>• Active citizens & communities stepping up <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Health a great City to lead a healthy & active life <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>• Clean streets <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Improving local centres <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<u>City Core Priorities</u>	<u>LIF Priorities</u>	• Children - a Great City to Grow Up In <input type="checkbox"/>	• Citizens' Independence & Well Being <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	• Jobs & Skills a great City to succeed in <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	• New approaches to investment <input type="checkbox"/>	• Housing a great City to live in <input type="checkbox"/>	• Active citizens & communities stepping up <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	• Health a great City to lead a healthy & active life <input type="checkbox"/>	• Clean streets <input type="checkbox"/>		Improving local centres <input type="checkbox"/>
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<p>What is your innovative idea and how does it show collaborative, partnership working and active citizenship?</p> <p>Smart Works Birmingham is a charity based in Northfield town centre that provides high quality interview clothes, styling advice and interview training to women in need. We give women the confidence, the self-belief and the practical tools they require to succeed at interview and start a new chapter of their life.</p> <p>We are incredibly proud that after launching in August 2016, we have supported over 200 women before their interviews and after visiting Smart Works, 59% of those we those we were able to contact went on to get the job.</p> <p>At the core of our service is a two-hour pre-interview appointment, during which time each woman receives a complete outfit of high quality clothes and accessories (personally styled for them and theirs to keep) and dedicated one-to-one interview coaching. This short intervention has a significant impact as our clients start believing in their own ability to succeed. In the words of recent clients:</p> <p><i>"Thank you so much, not just for the clothes and the confidence, but for the feeling of being worthy"</i></p> <p><i>"I feel empowered. I didn't know it was going to be like this. It's life changing."</i></p> <p>Women are referred to us once they have secured a job interview and once they get a job, we offer clients a Second Dressing for more clothing to see them through to their first pay cheque. We currently offer an additional coaching session for those who aren't successful at interview and signpost to organisations and opportunities that can support them to overcome any barriers to employment.</p> <p>The women we support are from a wide range of backgrounds and are currently out of work for various</p>													

reasons. Many have been raising children and are now looking to return to work, some have been carers; others have been victims of domestic violence, have had mental health issues or have recently been released from prison. Smart Works Birmingham is available to any unemployed woman who is in need of a confidence boost and support prior to their job interview. We are also now looking into working with women who have secured employment but are looking for in-work progression (more hours, higher pay etc.)

With just one member of staff (Smart Works Birmingham manager), the service itself is volunteer-led with over 25 skilled and trained volunteers running styling and coaching sessions for our clients. Harnessing the skills and commitment of volunteers who are keen to help disadvantaged women. Our volunteers are all interviewed, trained, DBS checked and peer reviewed before they join the Smart Works Birmingham team. Our volunteers gain a significant opportunity to engage in a meaningful project, whilst developing their own skills and opportunities for employment.

The charity uses a partnership model to ensure that referrals for our service come from a wide range of organisations. Since opening we have worked in partnership with over 50 organisations including: Jobcentre Plus, People Plus, HMP Foston Hall, Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid, Crisis, St Basil's, Talent Match and Prospects.

We are committed to the continued innovation, expansion and refinement of our service and passionate about the potential to bring it to more women in Birmingham, ensuring we reach those who are often hardest to help and most in need.

To further develop our service, we need to ensure we have a team that can lead our organisation, deliver a consistent standard of service, and work with our partners to ensure that Smart Works continues to thrive across the City. Creating support for the Smart Works Birmingham manager will be key to delivering our vision and plans for growth.

We are seeking a grant of £15,000, this money will allow us to employ an apprentice, develop our Smart Works Birmingham network, deliver training for volunteers, run workshops with young people in and out of the school environment and money will also go towards core costs.

Apprentice: We would like to recruit an apprentice aged 18 to 25 from the Northfield Constituency to be part of the team for one year. This person will help with administration, the running of the Smart Works Birmingham office and will help us to develop further opportunities for job sustainability for the clients we support who are successful at interview.

Working alongside the manager, the apprentice will ensure booking systems and databases are kept up to date, they will be first point of contact for our clients and help us to grow our referral partners and opportunities for clients to develop their skills.

Smart Works Birmingham network: We would like to offer additional support for our clients who enter employment to create job sustainability and to support them in their journey to overcome any barriers that may occur due to them re-entering the workplace. This will be particularly pertinent for the younger clients we support aged 18 to 25 as they will be entering the workplace potentially for the first time, and for those going back to work following gaps in employment which may have had a significant

impact on their confidence. Following in the path of other Smart Works sites, we will develop a Smart Works Birmingham network for those women we've supported into work. The network will meet regularly and will include inspirational speakers, social events, fundraising events and workshops. Our aim is to assist with career progression and to provide workshops and speakers that support the health and wellbeing of our clients. We will also maintain contact with the clients who go back into work but who do not wish to be part of the network for six months.

Whilst we support women from across Birmingham, we have a commitment to the local area where we are situated and have a desire to encourage women from Northfield constituency to strive for success. Upskilling will be of particular focus as well as health and wellbeing to ensure that once they enter into work, they can sustain this employment and thrive.

Training for volunteers: Our volunteers are key to the success of Smart Works Birmingham. They deliver the service and work directly with clients. It is vital that they receive training on a regular basis to ensure that they can fully support our clients to the best of their ability and continue to deliver an excellent service. Training will be available for both styling volunteers and coaches.

Workshops with young people: Workshops would be on topics such as interview skills, self-confidence and body image to help support those coming out of school, college, university and those not in employment, training or education; supported by local employers. We are looking to work in conjunction with the Girls' Network to deliver workshops in schools and a number of our volunteer team have expressed an interest in delivering workshops.

We will work in partnership with organisations such as Northfield Community Partnership, Workers' Educational Association, The Project, National Careers Service, The Springfield Project (free counselling) and W.A.I.T.S (Women Acting in Today's Society) to provide tailored support for clients and volunteer team.

We believe our proposal fits your guidelines within the innovation category as there is currently no other interview preparation service and work support service specifically for women based within Birmingham. We enable individuals to realise their potential by building self-confidence and skills and are now looking to further develop our offer to enhance the lives of women from Birmingham and support them as they progress their careers.

Time Frame – is it:-

One off event/programme

Implement and complete within 6 months (2016)

Implement and complete within 12 months (2017)

x

How will the innovation be implemented?

To implement our innovation, we will:

- Recruit a Business Administration apprentice from the Northfield constituency, working in partnership with Bournville College
- Implement training for our volunteer team
- Develop our referral partner organisations and contacts within these organisations who may be able to offer guidance on support available for clients
- Create signposting information for clients
- Create Smart Works Birmingham network and publicise with those clients we've already supported into work as well as informing new clients
- Work in partnership with the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) to provide workshops for our clients who are looking for self-development opportunities and also offer the Smart Works Birmingham service to those taking part in WEA workshops
- Develop more partnerships with corporate organisations and community organisations including, libraries, community centres, schools, children's centres, and online platforms such as B31 Voices. These connections will be vital in order to offer workshops and events for the Smart Works Birmingham network as well as promoting the service to boost referrals
- Connect with more local referral agencies to boost our referrals from Northfield constituency
- Produce case studies to be shared publicly, highlighting the work that we do and our clients' journeys
- Look for ways to engage young women with the service to help with their career aspirations
- Connect with organisations and individuals who can deliver workshops for clients – develop a programme of workshops that can be piloted for use in schools with students and open workshops for women in the local area
- Look to develop an information pack which can be given to those accessing our workshops and also a more comprehensive interview pack for clients to keep following their visit to Smart Works Birmingham in preparation for interview

What outcomes will the proposal achieve? What will success look like and how will its impact be measured? How will you ensure legacy/ continuation and what learning will the project provide?

The project will:

- Continue to sustain our success rate of over one in two going on to get the job
- Ensure women going back into work are supported for the first six months
- Create a diverse and meaningful opportunity for the apprentice involved
- Develop the skills of its volunteer team - increasing work based skills, and opportunities for personal development
- Create opportunities for women entering the workforce to develop their knowledge,

awareness and raise aspirations

- Encourage young people to be more assertive when it comes to job interviews and career paths and also developing positive body image awareness
- Support ladies as they navigate the interview process and ensure they receive plenty of thorough information to support them
- Raise awareness of the work we do at Smart Works and the impact on women's lives
- Encourage less benefit dependency which will, in turn, increase spending power and stability of women coming through the service
- Increase the health and wellbeing of families through the impact of having greater financial stability
- Create more dynamic partnerships with corporate and voluntary sector organisations

Having an apprentice working as part of the team will enable us to develop the service. By developing partnerships with other organisations, we open opportunities for joint working in the future. By nurturing our volunteer team, if the Smart Works Birmingham network is a success, we can continue to run it with volunteers taking over. Volunteers with us for the development of these projects in 2017 can also mentor new volunteers in the future to ensure they can support our clients to the best of their ability.

Our success will be measured by the growth of the organisation and the numbers of women remaining in employment: we are looking to increase referrals, particularly from the Northfield constituency. We will track and maintain contact with the clients who go on to get jobs for their first six months of employment: our aim is to support them to ensure they remain in employment long-term. A detailed database is kept which can pull out key demographics for clients such as postcode areas, ethnicity, where referrals have come from social background classification and job outcome, this information is used to report to funders and ensures that Smart Works Birmingham is able to target areas where the service is not performing well.

Our volunteer team will expand and take part in regular training sessions. We will introduce one-to-one sessions for volunteers to make sure they are happy at Smart Works Birmingham and to keep them up to date.

We will measure the success of the Smart Works Birmingham network by ensuring those involved have the chance to give us feedback and by tailoring it to individual's needs. We will have a greater online presence and share opportunities that may be relevant to our clients through online platforms.

From this project, we hope to learn more about the barriers women face in order to go back into work and find ways of addressing such problems.

Have you considered other sources of funding and whether the project can be used to leverage further funding from elsewhere (please specify funding sources)?

Funding has been secured for initial start-up costs from the DWP and NESTA.

The funding sought is for a salary post for an apprentice and to develop our work looking to support women to sustain their jobs and progress their careers.

What resources will be required?

	£
- Capital	
- Running costs	£15,000
- People power volunteers	

Amount required from LIF £.....15,000 (£5,000 from each ward)

Have you got any match funding – in cash or in kind?

We have £21,275 match funding in volunteer hours (based on 50 volunteers paid at the living wage rate and contributing fifty hours each during the year)

We will also seek a bursary from Birmingham City Council of £3000 to top up the apprentice wage.

Contact person for proposal

Name: Joanne Penn-Crossland (Manager)

Telephone: 0121 4775803

E-mail: joanne.penn@smartworks.org.uk

Which residents or community groups was the proposal discussed with and when (please give details of any meetings and which councillors attended)?

Northfield Ward Forum, Kings Norton Ward Forum and Weoley Ward Forum during March to May, as well as in subsequent conversations with potential partners arising from those Forums

Discussed at

Ward meeting Northfield

Date 20th March 2017

Signatures of all 3 Ward Councillors

Name CLL R. DEBKIE CLANCY Signature [Signature] Date 13.6.17
 Name BRETT O'REILLY Signature [Signature] Date 13/6/17
 Name DANIEL BLEN Signature [Signature] Date 13.6.17

Internal use only

Received: Date

Go to Cabinet Committee – Local Leadership for decision: Date

Approved

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>