

Reaching communities

Example application

What will you spend the money on?

Salaries: £86,000 Training: £4000 Materials: £6000 Marketing and printing: £4000 We already have secured £20,000 confirmed income which will be used for the van and venues hire.

Project start date

Tell us when you'd like to get the money if you're awarded funding?

2025-07-25

Project duration

How long do you need the money for?

3 years

Your idea

What would you like to do?

What: We aim to launch an innovative mental health support program combining creative arts and zine-making across three interconnected services. Our approach uses art as a therapeutic tool, teaching various art techniques in group workshops, creating a safe environment to express feelings and gain support. Aiming to save lives and reduce mental health crises through regular supportive community group activities both in person and online.

Outputs:

1. Mobile Zine Workshop Service (Cornwall) - A custom-fitted van serving as a mobile creative studio - Weekly half-day sessions targeting early intervention psychosis and self-harm prevention - Partnering with local mental health trust teams - Benefiting 10 people per session. 50 per year.

2. Community Reintegration Arts Program (Leeds) - Weekly creative sessions for individuals transitioning from mental health institutions - Safe, supportive environment for building social connections - Skill development through collaborative zine guided art workshops - Helping participants use their art as a way to deliver feedback about their care to NHS services. -Benefiting 5 people per session and 50 per year.

3. Digital Creative Wellbeing Sessions (England-wide) - Online guided art sessions using household materials - Weekly Zoom workshops focusing on accessible creative techniques - Digital zine creation and sharing platform - Virtual community building -Online support from mental health -Benefiting 25 per session and 400 per year

Who: Directly supporting 500 people annually across three key groups: - Young adults experiencing early-stage mental health challenges - Individuals transitioning from mental health institutions - People on NHS waiting lists seeking immediate creative support - Secondary beneficiaries include families, carers, and local communities

The difference:

Short-term: - Reduced isolation through creative community engagement - Improved mental wellbeing through artistic expression - Development of new creative skills and coping mechanisms - Immediate access to support while waiting for NHS services

Long-term: - Decreased self-harm incidents and hospitalizations - Reduced pressure on NHS mental health services - Stronger community connections and support networks - Enhanced employment prospects through skill development - Improved family relationships and social integration

New Elements: - Mobile creative studio bringing services to rural Cornwall - Hybrid delivery model combining in-person and digital support - Integration of traditional art techniques with digital zine creation - Cross-regional approach connecting diverse communities

Proven Elements: - Building on our successful track record of zine-making workshops - Expanding our established mental health support methodology - Utilising our existing partnerships with mental health professionals - Scaling our tested creative wellbeing approach

Our organisation, Zine Swap Shop CIC, has demonstrated success in delivering creative workshops and building supportive communities. This project represents a strategic scaling of our work, addressing critical gaps in mental health support services while leveraging our expertise in creative arts and community building.

Through comprehensive evaluation and professional partnerships, we'll ensure sustainable impact and create a model that can be replicated across other regions. Our approach fills a crucial gap in early intervention services, providing immediate, accessible support through creative engagement while people await NHS care.

How does your project involve your community?

Our project has been shaped directly by extensive community consultation and successful pilot programs across multiple regions.

Community Consultation Statistics: - 200+ detailed surveys completed by service users and mental health team members in Leeds and Cornwall - 350 participants in nationwide online pilot sessions - 40 participants in regional pilot programs - Engagement with 5 NHS trusts - 95% satisfaction rate from all pilot participants

Leeds 1 year Pilot Program Impact: The Leeds community integration program funded by Arts Council England engaged 30 participants all having been released from mental health facilities, producing remarkable results: - 93% reported improved sense of community belonging - 87% experienced reduced feelings of isolation - 95% felt more confident in expressing themselves

The art work was distributed and used in training to 5 local NHS trusts helping change their approach to care.

"The zine-making sessions gave me a voice I didn't know I had. For the first time, I could share my experiences in a way that felt safe and meaningful." - Sarah, Leeds participant

"This program has been transformative for our service users. The creative approach opens up conversations that traditional therapy sometimes struggles to achieve." - Dr. James Thompson, NHS Mental Health Team Lead

Cornwall Early Intervention Success:

Our 1 year pilot weekly sessions engaging 50 people with early intervention psychosis teams demonstrated significant impact: - 100% of participants reported feeling more hopeful about their recovery - 90% discovered new coping mechanisms through creative expression - 95% wanted to continue with regular sessions

"Before these sessions, I struggled to explain my experiences to my family. Creating zines has given me a new way to communicate." - Mark, Cornwall participant

"The mobile workshop concept is brilliant - it brings vital creative support directly to communities that often feel isolated and forgotten."
- Emma Roberts, Community Mental Health Nurse National Online

Engagement:

Our digital pilot online workshop reached 350 participants nationwide:
- 89% reported improved mental wellbeing after sessions - 92% would recommend the program to others - 85% requested monthly ongoing sessions 350 participants helped us design this project. They chose topics, times, day days, lengths of sessions and what add on support they wanted. NHS Partnership Impact: A significant outcome of our Leeds pilot was the creation of a collaborative feedback zine, now used in NHS staff training: - Distributed across 5 NHS trusts - Reached 1,000+ healthcare professionals - 88% of staff reported improved understanding of service user experiences

"The service user zine has become an invaluable training tool, offering insights we couldn't get any other way." - Claire Williams, NHS Training Coordinator

Future Community Integration: Based on community feedback, we're implementing: - Monthly online sessions for nationwide accessibility - Regular community showcase events - Peer support networks in each location - Collaborative projects with local mental health organizations

"This project isn't just about art - it's about building a supportive community that understands and uplifts each other." - Local Mental Health Charity Director

How does your idea fit in with other local activities?

Service Gaps Addressed: The NHS currently faces significant challenges in mental health service delivery, with average waiting

times of 18+ weeks for psychological therapies in both Cornwall and Leeds.

Our project addresses critical gaps in: - Early intervention services for people experiencing first episodes of psychosis - Creative therapy options for those awaiting NHS treatment - Mobile mental health support in rural Cornwall - Community reintegration support in Leeds - Accessible nationwide creative wellbeing activities Complementary

Local Activities: In Cornwall: - Working alongside Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust's Early Intervention Team - Complementing Mind Cornwall's counseling services with creative therapy - Supporting Outlook South West's talking therapies with artistic expression - Enhancing Cornwall Rural Community Charity's outreach work In Leeds: - Supplementing Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust's services - Supporting Leeds Mind's peer support programs - Complementing Arts and Minds Network's creative activities - Enhancing Community Links' mental health support

Established Community Links: Our organisation, Zine Swap Shop CIC, has developed strong community connections through: - Weekly zine-making workshops at The Old Cattle Market, Helston - Partnerships with local mental health charities - Relationships with community centers and arts organisations - Networks with mental health professionals and support workers

Key Partnership Details: Cornwall Partnerships: 1. Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust - Two-year relationship - Collaborated on pilot workshops - Provided clinical oversight and referrals 2. Mind Cornwall - Joint workshop delivery since 2024 - Shared resources and expertise - Cross-referral system in place Leeds Partnerships: 1. Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust - Partnership established through pilot program - Successful delivery of 30-participant program - Collaborative development of

training materials 2. Leeds Mind - Strategic partnership since 2024 - Shared venue arrangements - Joint funding applications National Partners: 1. Mental Health Foundation - Online workshop collaboration - Resource development support - National reach enhancement 2. Arts and Health Network - Professional development support - Best practice guidance - Quality assurance framework Our partnerships are formalised through Memorandums of Understanding, ensuring clear roles and responsibilities. Regular partnership meetings maintain strong communication and collaborative service delivery. The project builds on these existing relationships while developing new partnerships to ensure comprehensive support. Our established presence in both regions positions us uniquely to deliver this expanded service effectively.

Tell us why your organisation is the right one to manage this project

Why We're the Right Organisation: Organisational Overview: Zine Swap Shop CIC is a community interest company dedicated to improving mental wellbeing through creative expression and zine-making. Our mission focuses on making art accessible while building supportive communities.

We currently deliver: - Weekly free zine-making workshops in Helston, Cornwall - Online creative workshops reaching nationwide audiences - Mental health support through artistic expression Experience and Expertise: Our Team: - Lead Artist/Founder with extensive zine-making expertise - Mental health professionals in both Leeds and Cornwall - Experienced workshop facilitators - Digital engagement specialists Established Partnerships: - Active collaborations with 5 NHS trusts - Strong relationships with mental health charities - Networks with community arts organisations - Connections with early intervention teams - Digital platform partnerships Track Record: Our success in delivering impactful programs is demonstrated through: - Weekly workshops engaging 30+ regular participants - Online

sessions reaching 350+ participants nationwide - 100% satisfaction rate in Cornwall pilot programs - Successful partnership projects with NHS trusts - Innovative mobile workshop delivery Integration of Lived

Experience: Our organisation prioritises lived experience in program design and delivery: Peer Leadership: - 60% of our workshop facilitators have lived experience of mental health challenges - Service users contribute to program design - Participant feedback directly shapes our activities Co-Production Approach: - Regular consultation with service user groups - Participant-led content creation - Community-driven program development - Inclusive decision-making processes Value Addition to Current Work: This project will enhance our impact by: - Scaling successful pilot programs - Reaching underserved communities - Developing innovative mobile services - Creating sustainable support networks - Building cross-regional connections

Our unique position combines: 1. Proven track record in creative mental health support 2. Established partnerships across target regions 3. Experience in both in-person and digital delivery 4. Understanding of local community needs 5. Innovation in service delivery methods National Impact and Scalability: Zine Swap Shop CIC stands as the only organisation delivering a nationwide creative mental health support program combining physical and digital services.

Our innovative three-tier approach (mobile workshops, community reintegration, and online sessions) creates a replicable model that can be scaled across all NHS trust regions. Our successful pilot engagement with 5 NHS trusts has already demonstrated the program's adaptability and impact. The digital component allows immediate nationwide scaling, while our established framework for mobile and community services provides a blueprint for regional expansion. Early interest from additional NHS trusts indicates strong

potential for national adoption, making our model uniquely positioned to transform creative mental health support across England. Through our established presence in both Leeds and Cornwall, plus our successful nationwide digital engagement, we have the foundation necessary to implement this expanded program successfully. Our team's combination of artistic expertise, mental health knowledge, and lived experience creates a robust framework for project delivery.