

Bridge Project Community Referral Partners' Information Pack

VOICES
NORTHUMBERLAND

The logo for Voices Northumberland features the word "VOICES" in a bold, black, sans-serif font above "NORTHUMBERLAND" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. A green horizontal line with a speech bubble tail on the right side is positioned below the text.

The Bridge logo consists of a blue, stylized arch above the word "BRIDGE" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below "BRIDGE" is the tagline "Building better opportunities across Northumberland" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

BRIDGE
Building better opportunities across Northumberland

The National Lottery logo features a white hand icon with the index and middle fingers pointing up, next to a pink circle containing the text "BIG LOTTERY FUND". Below these elements is the text "NATIONAL LOTTERY FUNDED" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

**NATIONAL
LOTTERY FUNDED**

The European Union logo features a blue square with twelve yellow stars arranged in a circle. Below the square is the text "European Union" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, with "European Social Fund" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font below it.

European Union
European
Social Fund

The Bridge Project is funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery, through the Big Lottery Fund as part of the Building Better Opportunities Programme.

To support your organisation's role as a Community Referral Partner, this information pack has been developed to provide information and guidance.

Within this pack you should have the following information:

- What is Bridge?
- What is a Community Referral Partner?
- Frequently asked questions
- Who is eligible to receive support from Bridge
- Values and principles of Bridge
- A sample referral form
- Bridge Community Referral Partner sign up form



What is Bridge?

The Bridge Project is part of the national Building Better Opportunities programme and is aimed at removing barriers to employment for local people living in Northumberland who are furthest away from the job market.

The project is funded to 2019 by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery, through the Big Lottery Fund as part of the Building Better Opportunities Programme and is a partnership made up of seven Voluntary Sector organisations with Northumberland County Council acting as the accountable body.

In order to achieve our overall aim Bridge will deliver the following outcomes:

1. **Increased resilience and confidence in beneficiaries** to enable them to meet challenges, and cope with these, to maintain meaningful progression towards employability and into employment.
2. **Increased engagement in communities** through peer led mentoring and volunteering to increase confidence, skills, ambition and aspiration in both individuals and their wider communities.
3. **Improved integration and joining up provision** across all sectors for those furthest away from the labour market.
4. **Maintain the life changes and progression towards employability** – support beneficiaries to transition towards being able to effectively engage with mainstream services.

The Partnership includes:

- VoiCeS Northumberland
- Blyth Resource and Initiative Centre
- Citizens Advice Northumberland
- Cygnus Support
- Northumberland Community Voluntary Action
- Community Action Northumberland
- Northern Learning Trust

Bridge has adopted an 'asset- based' approach to working with local people by carrying out a holistic assessment to recognise their strengths and needs. This will identify supported needed to remove barriers in peoples' lives. We have a team of Bridge Workers who work across Northumberland. They coordinate the support needs of beneficiaries and act as a 'single point of contact' and agree bespoke action plans with individuals. If required, the Partners bring specialisms to provide activities or interventions to help people.

In addition, Bridge will work alongside other Voluntary Sector and Public Sector agencies to help people access services and opportunities that will assist in moving them towards

the labour market. We want to coordinate our work and utilise the strengths and assets already in communities across the county and avoid duplication.

What is a Community Referral Partner?

As a Community Referral Partner, you recognise that services and support are best delivered to individuals and communities when organisations cooperate and work together. Your organisation will be one that embraces a culture of partnership working and focuses on what is best to meet the individual's needs.

You will have a similar ethos to Bridge and recognise that a holistic approach to helping individuals is the best way forward. Your values and principles most likely match the ones Bridge have and you will agree to uphold them.

It is most likely that you are a community- based organisation or service that is already supporting or engaging with vulnerable people in our Northumberland communities.

As a Community Referral Partner, you have a key role to play in engaging with members of the community and then referring them directly to Bridge.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Bridge?

Bridge is an employability programme which is about helping people move closer to the labour market. It offers personalised support and looks to work with people in our communities who face a range of barriers or have vulnerabilities.

How is Bridge Funded?

Bridge is jointly funded by the the European Social Fund and National Lottery, through the Big Lottery Fund. Northumberland County Council acts as the accountable body, with Voices Northumberland the operational lead in a partnership of five other Voluntary Sector organisations.

How long will Bridge run for?

Bridge 'went live' in December 2016 and will currently run to September 2019.

Where are Bridge staff based?

Bridge has a team of twelve 'Bridge Workers'. Ten are co-located in Partners' offices across Northumberland. At Voices' head office in Amble, Bridge has an Operational Manager, an Engagement Worker and two Specialist Bridge Workers.

Who can refer people to Bridge?

Individuals can be referred through any of the Bridge Partners. The 'Community Referral Partners' will become part of a wider network that will make direct referrals themselves.

How can you refer people to Bridge?

Referrals can be made either online or via post. There are certain ESF eligibility criteria to be met so the Operational Manager carries out a short review of the person's status and, if eligible, they are allocated a Bridge Worker.

How long will people get support?

A bespoke action plan will be developed jointly with a beneficiary and any timescales and targets will be agreed by them. The levels of support will vary from person to person but it is possible that someone could continue to get Bridge's support for the full duration of the programme, if that is what they need.

How does my organisation become a Community Referral Partner?

Please complete and return the forms on Pages 14 and 15 of this information pack. You can email Bridge at: bridge@voices-northumberland.org.uk

Why are we asking you to complete the sign-up form?

We need to formally collate some brief information about your organisation, whether voluntary sector or public sector. It is important that we are working with partners who believe in good governance and so have policies and procedures in place, especially, as by making a referral you will be sharing personal and sensitive information.

We all have a duty to safeguard. Therefore, we ask that you have policies and procedures in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults (and they have been updated within the last three years).

Don't panic! We and our Partners can help you put these in place or update them.

What help/support does a Community Referral Partner Get?

Community Referral Partners will be provided with an information pack explaining the role fully. This pack will be circulated to all staff or volunteers who will be involved.

Community Referral Partners will be provided with clear instruction in the use of the online referral system. If hard copies of the referral form are required these will also be provided.

Bridge will regularly review and monitor the arrangements with you to ensure it is working smoothly and effectively for your organisation. Community Referral Partners will be updated on the referrals they make and the progress of the individuals.

Bridge Workers will liaise and coordinate their work with you, if you are also providing direct support to our beneficiaries who have been referred.

Are Community Referral Partners Funded by Bridge?

Bridge does not make payments to Community Referral Partners. The intention of Bridge is to bring added value to existing programmes and initiatives. Bridge wants to work with Community Referral Partners who recognise this and so we have developed a referral process that will minimise impact on a Partner's existing services and you will be working with people who will benefit from the project. As part of our support we will regularly review this with you.

Will Bridge support any outreach work?

Community outreach and engagement is fundamental to Bridges' approach. Where Community Referral Partners identify a gap, Bridge is happy to discuss this with them, on a case by case basis as to how this could be resourced.

Who is eligible to receive support from Bridge

The Bridge Project is an employability support project, the aim is to get people into work or help move them closer to work; focusing on people who experience multiple disadvantage and who are often socially excluded.

Eligibility is an ESF rule and is **non-negotiable** – 'near enough' will not be acceptable.

Any participant of any stage of Bridge must meet three tests. They must be:

- ✓ Legally resident in the UK and **living in Northumberland**; and
- ✓ Able to take paid employment in European Union member states; and
- ✓ Be unemployed or economically inactive.

Step 1

*Anyone taking part in Bridge **must be eligible to live and work in the UK and be living in Northumberland.** We will need to see evidence of this – this will be completed by the Bridge Worker.*

Step 2

The person must not be working and be **unemployed**, which means people are currently looking for work. They may be receiving unemployment benefits of some kind.

OR

The person must not be working and **economically inactive**, which means people are not currently looking for work for some reason. They may also be receiving benefits of some kind.

Step 3

As Bridge is about working with people with multiple issues and complex needs, this will mean **identifying people with at least 2 of the following factors/disadvantages**, N.B. this is not a definitive list;

- ✓ People with long term health conditions
- ✓ People with a disability
- ✓ People with parental responsibilities
- ✓ Caring responsibilities (for adults)
- ✓ People experiencing hardship or debt
- ✓ People substance misuse
- ✓ People experiencing domestic violence
- ✓ People experiencing mental health problems
- ✓ People who are homeless or at risk of being homeless
- ✓ Refugees and Asylum seekers (only where permission to work has been granted)
- ✓ People who are at risk of offending or re-offending
- ✓ Black, Asian and Minority groups
- ✓ People who are isolated, socially and geographically
- ✓ People with poor basic skills
- ✓ People aged 50+ with few or no qualifications or not in employment
- ✓ People on a low income, single-earner households with children where one partner is not working
- ✓ People who are out of contact with the labour market
- ✓ People who are care leavers
- ✓ People who are in a single parent household.

*Young people aged 16-19 are **only eligible** if they are NEET. However, there is a substantial amount of ESF-funded provision targeting NEET's. So, while we would not turn anyone eligible away, we would look to refer people in these age brackets to other ESF-funded provision that might be more appropriate.*

People **not eligible** are those who are:

- ✗ *Working part time, even if claiming benefits*
- ✗ *Working zero hour contracts*
- ✗ *Asylum seekers who do not have permission to work*
- ✗ *In custody*
- ✗ *Self employed*

Values and Principles of Bridge

Values

The Bridge Partners and Community Referral Partners will:

- Listen to, respect and value each person as an individual
- Encourage honesty and openness about services we provide and decisions we make
- Ensure that everyone who uses our services is treated with courtesy and respect while receiving a reliable, prompt and efficient service

Our commitment to consultation and involvement is also underpinned by the following:

Principles

- **TRANSPARENCY:** We ensure that people understand the reasons for their involvement, the purpose of any intervention and issues to be addressed. We report back to people on the outcomes of consultations and involvement work.
- **SOCIAL INCLUSION:** We remove social or structural barriers that may prevent involvement, such as ensuring buildings are physically accessible. We provide suitable methods of communication, in plain English, including alternative languages, British Sign Language (BSL) and Braille. Where necessary, we provide interpreters and advocacy support to ensure that everyone has a chance to have their say.
- **PARTNERSHIP:** We work in partnership with statutory, private and voluntary organisations, community and beneficiary interest groups, carers and individuals.

A sample referral form

Bridge Project – Building Better Opportunities across Northumberland

Bridge is an employability support project aiming to move those individuals who are furthest away from the labour market closer to employment. To be eligible to receive support from Bridge a person must meet the following criteria.

- ✓ Legally resident in the UK and **living in Northumberland**; and able to take paid employment in European Union member states; and
- ✓ Be unemployed or economically inactive.

* A person is unemployed if they are currently looking for work and may be in receipt of unemployment benefits. A person is economically inactive if they are not currently looking for work or are unable to work currently, they may also be in receipt of benefits of some kind.

The project will offer support by working with people with multiple issues and complex needs across Northumberland, therefore to be able to access the project at least 2 of the following factors / disadvantages need to be identified: *N.B. this is not a definitive list;*

- ✓ People with long term health conditions
- ✓ People with a disability
- ✓ People with parental responsibilities
- ✓ Caring responsibilities (for adults)

- ✓ People experiencing hardship or debt
- ✓ People substance misuse
- ✓ People experiencing domestic violence
- ✓ People experiencing mental health problems
- ✓ People who are homeless or at risk of being homeless
- ✓ Refugees and Asylum seekers (only where permission to work has been granted)
- ✓ People who are at risk of offending or re-offending
- ✓ Black, Asian and Minority groups
- ✓ People who are isolated, socially and geographically
- ✓ People with poor basic skills
- ✓ People aged 50+ with few or no qualifications or not in employment
- ✓ People on a low income, single-earner households with children where one partner is not working
- ✓ People who are out of contact with the labour market
- ✓ People who are care leavers
- ✓ People who are in a single parent household.

Bridge is being delivered through a partnership between Public Sector and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations. They are: Northumberland County Council (Project Lead and Accountable Body), VoiCeS Northumberland (Strategic and Operational Lead), Blyth Resource and Initiative Centre, Citizens Advice Northumberland and Cygnus Support, Community Action Northumberland and the Northern Learning Trust.

To refer to Bridge you can complete the attached referral form and send to :

Operational Manager, Bridge Project
 Voices Northumberland
 1st Floor , The Fourways
 Bridge Street
 Amble
 Northumberland
 NE65 0RD

(Please note all envelopes must be marked Private and Confidential – to be opened by addressee only).



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Bridge Project – Building Better Opportunities across Northumberland

Referral Information		
Name		
D.O.B		
Address		
Contact Number		
Best way to make contact		
Can you confirm the following?	Eligible to live and work in the UK	Yes No
Please confirm employment status by ticking relevant box.	<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Economically inactive	
How does the beneficiary, as far as you are aware, meet the eligibility criteria for supporting those with multiple issues and complex needs? Please provide details and reason for referral.		

Risk Assessment

Please indicate and provide details of any identified or known risks.

Risk to Self:
(including self harm, suicidal ideations, overdose, health, vulnerable adult)

Risk to Others:
(Risk to staff, history of violence, aggressive behaviour, lone working , home visits also including risk to children / vulnerable adults)

Risk from others:
(Specific identifiable risk from others including domestic violence).

Any additional information:

Including restrictions to access service / interpreter required:

Please provide details:

Beneficiary views and consent

Please use this space to add the views or any comments from the beneficiary.

I agree that this information is correct and can be shared with Bridge as part of the referral process. I have had it explained to me how information about me will be held and why. I understand that on occasions personal information may be shared without my consent if there are overriding concerns. By signing I also give my consent to this referral being made.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Referrer Details	
Service / Agency	
Name	
Contact Details	
Signature	
Date	



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Bridge Community Referral Partner sign up form

By completing this form you are confirming that you are working with people who could be referred onto the Bridge Project.

About you and your organisation

Name of organisation	
Team/Department	
Lead contact details	
Name	
Position	
Email address	
Telephone number	
Address	

Who do you primarily work with? (Please tick)

Children, young people & families	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vulnerable adults	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug and alcohol	<input type="checkbox"/>	Offenders/ex offenders	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domestic abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Homeless	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mental health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Armed forces/ex service	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ethnic & cultural diversity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Long term health problems	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state)			

Please tick to confirm that your organisation has:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Policies and procedures in place for safeguarding adults and children
<input type="checkbox"/>	A Designated Person for safeguarding – please provide their name and contact email address:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name: <input type="text"/> Email: <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information sharing policies and data protection procedures in place
<input type="checkbox"/>	Understanding of the referral criteria for the Bridge Project
<input type="checkbox"/>	Read and understands the aims and objectives of Bridge

Signed: <input type="text"/>	Date: <input type="text"/>
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Thank you for completing this form – please email your form to bridge@voices-northumberland.org.uk. Your information will be considered and you will receive further information via email.

Bridge Community Referral Partner Contact Details

Name of organisation:

Lead contact name:

Position:

Tel:

Email:

Contacts who will make referrals to Bridge:

Name	Position/role	Email

*Thank you for completing this form – please email your form to
bridge@voices-northumberland.org.uk.
Your information will be considered and you will receive further information via email.*

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