**Growing Community Assets**

**Evaluation (Scotland)**

**Big Lottery Fund**

## Contents

ERS is delighted to submit this proposal to conduct an evaluation of Growing Community Assets (Scotland).  In doing so, and for ease of reference, we have adopted the headings listed in Annex 1 (Response to Tender) in the invitation to tender.

We appreciate the size and scope of this study, which is critical for understanding what the impacts of the funding have been, what has worked well and what can be improved.  We believe that the approach outlined in this proposal is robust and are confident that the study team has the capacity and experience required to successfully deliver this commission.  Furthermore, we believe that our proposal offers excellent value for money and, possibly uniquely, provides community groups with an opportunity to develop their own research, monitoring and evaluation skills.

# 1. Demonstrate A Clear Understanding Of The Big Lottery Fund And The GCA Investment Area

## Big Lottery Fund

The Big Lottery Fund is the organisation sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) responsible for distributing half of the money generated by the National Lottery for charitable and voluntary/community sector organisations across the UK.

Operating since Spring 2004, BIG brings together the work of the New Opportunities Fund and the Community Fund, as well as taking on the Millennium Commission's role in supporting large-scale regeneration projects. BIG will give out more than £2.3 billion [1] between 2006-2009.

Programmes delivered are divided into two broad areas: demand-led and strategic. Demand-led programmes encourage organisations and groups to bring their own ideas and local solutions for funding, whilst the strategic programmes focus on the type of outcomes BIG wants to achieve through the funding.

The Mission of Big Lottery Fund is "to bring real improvements to communities and the lives of people in need". Seven Values underpin BIG's work:

  Fairness;
  Accessibility;
  Strategic focus;
  Involving people;
  Innovation;
  Enabling; and
  Additional to Government.

Each programme has three key themes:
  Supporting community learning and creating opportunity
  Promoting community safety and cohesion
  Promoting well-being.

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[1] Source: http://www.governmentfunding.org.uk/Page.aspx?SP=252

These themes are in turn supported by outcomes for each of the countries of the UK. In respect of Scotland, this means that:

  People have better chances in life.
  Communities are safer, stronger, and more able to work together to tackle inequalities.
  People have better and more sustainable services and environments.
  People and communities are healthier.

It is recognised, therefore, that all work funded through BIG ought to make a contribution to achieving the overarching Mission and themes, in addition to making specific progress against the relevant outcomes.

**Growing Community Assets**

The Big Lottery Fund in Scotland has £257 million to spend between 2006 and 2009, aiming to bring improvements to communities and to the lives of people most in need.  This investment is being made in four different ways, of which Growing Community Assets (GCA) is one.  GCA itself is an extension of the Scottish Land Fund, supporting asset-based community development in urban as well as rural communities, with a budget of £50 million.

In essence, Growing Community Assets is about developing local assets to enable communities to have more control and over their future.  Not only can such assets be safeguarded for community use, providing amenities and services, but they might also be used to generate income streams and, possibly, employment opportunities. In doing so, it is hoped that local people might be encouraged to become more active within their communities, participate in relevant decision-making and demonstrate that people can make a difference within their local communities.

Growing Community Assets supports local communities to obtain assets (usually physical assets, such as land, buildings or equipment) that will help them become stronger and more sustainable (financially, environmentally and                      socially          ).  As well as acquiring assets, communities are helped to, improve, develop, manage and sustain them, by being given the resources to do so, buying in technical assistance and developing their own skills and knowledge. A wide range of groups can apply, but they must be community led and controlled, and run by and for people within a defined geographical area.

The types of projects proposed might include:

buying land and/or buildings (with an end purpose in mind);

developing buildings to enable them to meet demands for local amenities/services, involving a combination of economic and social purposes;

facilitating the growing/manufacture/retail of local produce and/or promoting the consumption of healthy foods;

improving the sustainability of amenities and/or activities, through the use of renewable energy, waste recycling etc.; and

supporting community activities/connections by developing sustainable transport routes, such as cycleways.

BIG expects most of grants to be between £10,000 and £1,000,000 (£10,000-200,000 for technical assistance), though exceptional cases will be considered. Whilst BIG will support 100% of technical costs, it expects to see at least a 5% community contribution to asset acquisition (in most cases) and, in respect of asset development, at least a 25% contribution to revenue costs and at least a 50% contribution to capital costs.

All applicants need to demonstrate that they are working towards at least one of the following outcomes:

Communities are more able to grasp opportunities and are more enterprising and self-reliant;

Communities are stronger, with shared aspirations and the ability to achieve these together;

Communities have services and amenities that meet people's needs better and are more accessible;

People have more skills, knowledge and confidence, and opportunities to use these for the benefit of their community;

Communities have a more positive impact on the local and global environment.

Specialist advice and help is available to prospective applicants all over Scotland from a team led by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, which is also responsible for assessing applications.

To date, 32 grants have been awarded worth a total of around £11 million, with the grant-making period running through to March 2009.

## 2. Demonstrate Your Understanding Of The Aims, Objectives And Main Concerns Of The Evaluation

The objectives of this study have been defined by BIG as being to:

> Assess the impact of the Growing Community Assets investment area;
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> Identify the key factors that support successful community ownership; and
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> Evaluate the effectiveness of the delivery contract.

Impact assessment is required in social, economic and environmental terms, and appropriate indicators will need to be developed in order to provide robust measurement. Examples of how each type of impact might be measured are as follows:

Social – as well as standard data, such as population, we would look to assess provision at each site in relation to a number of indicators such as increased participation in activities, increased take up of services delivered by third parties, encouraging the formation of new groups, helping other groups to grow, reducing anti-social behaviour etc.

Economic – using HM Treasury Green Book Guidance (adopted by Scottish Ministers), including GVA per capita, employment participation rates, earnings, business start ups (including social enterprises).

Environmental – confirmation that appropriate statutory EIAs have been undertaken and enriching this information with qualitative data, for example, evidence of good waste management, minimal noise/light pollution, use of recycled materials and renewable energy, low carbon footprint etc. as well as other indicators, such as vacant/derelict land and buildings.

We feel it is most vital to recognise the need for flexibility in the evaluation process, in terms of applying a basket of component methods in response to what may be different contexts by area and activity delivered. This will allow a wealth of robust information to be generated in response to the Programme as it evolves throughout its operating period.

An important element of the evaluation process is the ability to establish a plausible link between the activity delivered through the project and the achievement of project aims. Hence there is a need to ensure that any changes in indicators are attributable to the project and not extraneous factors.

We recognise that the evaluation will need to determine both (i) if the process has worked (good partnership, capacity building, impact on Programme/BIG aims and objectives etc.) and (ii) what the results have been. Therefore, the study will include both formative evaluation (learning lessons), and summative evaluation (finding out results). It is also important to look at the processes that projects have gone through in order to explore options and refine their initial plans and any subsequent changes/improvements.

Quite clearly, the most critical elements of the evaluation are setting the baselines and putting in place a framework within which this information can be updated. This is absolutely fundamental as without a robust set of baselines and a means of updating them it would be impossible to measure the impact of GCA funding, compare the benefits of different approaches or assess value for money. Further information on this and other more detailed concerns of the evaluation can be found in Section 5 of this proposal.

In addition, we would keep the essential premise of GCA under review, in order to confirm that the intervention remains appropriate within changing political and policy contexts.

# 3. Demonstrate Your Awareness Of The Policy Context In Which GCA Operates And Of Related Issues Including Community Involvement, Community Ownership, Rural/Urban Contexts And Sustainable Development

## Background to GCA

Growing Community Assets is based on the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach and focuses upon developing communities existing assets as opposed to the traditional approach of focusing upon a communities needs and deficiencies. Such assets could include the skills of local residents, the power and influence of local groups, the resources of public, private and non-profit organisations and, as is the case in this context, physical and economic resources.

The ABCD approach is well established within international development and is increasingly being utilised across the UK. ABCD's appeal is its premise that communities can drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilising existing assets. Recognising their strengths is more likely to motivate communities towards positive action for change, as opposed to focusing specifically on needs and problems which may serve to denigrate the community. Another consequence of the traditional approach is that communities start to see themselves as deficient and incapable of taking charge of their lives and of the community, and can begin to act like clients or consumers of services with no incentive to be producers.

In respect of GCA, the focus is on physical resources, land and buildings, which will contribute to the social, economic and/or environmental development of both rural and urban communities. The fundamental premise behind this approach is that communities who own and control their own assets and resources will provide a better service to the community in which they live, whether services are social, economic or environmental. It also provides community groups with the potential to establish social enterprise to generate income to make them less grant dependent and therefore more sustainable.

Studies conducted in England, such as the Quirk Review and DCLG report on Community Assets, have supported asset-based community development as a worthwhile approach that merits government support.

GCA follows on from the Scottish Land Fund which was launched in 2001, under the New Opportunities Fund, with a budget of £10m and a supplement of £5m in 2003. The SLF provided support to rural communities who sought to acquire, develop and manage land or land assets which would make a contribution towards sustainable development in their area. The SLF supported three types of projects:

Planning and preparation of bids (technical assistance) - to acquire or manage land and land assets;

Acquisition of land - large or small areas to undertake a range of management and development projects, or environmental and/or recreational uses;

Land development projects – such as investment in management of natural resources, infrastructure developments, and the provision of facilities.

In total the SLF funded 188 community groups and was considered to have met all of its main objectives indicating that the community ownership approach could work in the following ways:

*Social key findings*

Social infrastructure had supported economic development, creating new businesses and attracting new residents;

The scale and sustainability of community participation was attributed to ownership of assets;

Project participants developed softer skills, such as managing meetings, and practical skills, such as using spreadsheets; and

Younger people and other specific groups had been engaged.

*Economic key findings*

Use of local contractors created employment opportunities;

New businesses were formed;

Assets were able to generate regular income.

*Environmental key findings*

Ownership has encouraged a greater sense of stewardship;

Improvements in woodlands and wildlife diversity;

Many projects were considering energy projects, such as wind turbines; and

Refurbishment of premises done to high environmental standards.

**Related Community Development Programmes**

*Transforming Waste*

Transforming Waste was funded by The New Opportunities Fund, now Big Lottery Fund, and between 2003 to 2006 distributed £4.46m to 49 projects worth a total of £14.6m.

The Programme provided support to community-based projects working to establish or expand waste recycling, reuse or composting and projects using education and awareness-raising to increase the weight of material recycled, reused or composted. It supported projects aiming to:

Increase the amount and range of materials diverted away from final disposal;

Increase the numbers of households participating in waste recycling, reuse and composting projects; and

Develop sustainable communities.

The Programme was designed to support activities that address priorities in the National Waste Strategy for Scotland and was focused on ensuring community sector involvement.

Subsequently, other policy and funding support with similar objectives to Transforming Waste Scotland emerged in relation to the role of the community sector in waste management and supporting the sustainability of community sector organisations (see Policy Context section below).

*Transforming Your Space*

In 2003, the New Opportunities Fund, now Big Lottery, launched Transforming Your Space in Scotland. In total, the programme had £47m to support projects aiming to:

Enhance the quality of life of local communities by improving the quality of the local environment in line with local and national initiatives;

Improve the appearance and amenity of local environments by transforming public and green spaces important to local people;

Increase the development of community assets by funding sustainable projects that engage with the local community, or that address development needs to include people in local decisions.

Transforming Your Space Scotland supported projects that engaged with communities in delivering activities under the following themes:

Improving Local Environments - improving the quality or appearance and amenity, such as safety and design of the street environment or tackle issues such as litter, graffiti and vandalism.

Public Green and Open Spaces – transforming spaces or creating new ones, such as play areas or public parks, to be used by local people and valued as an important part of the local environment.

Local Access - creating or improving local walking or cycling routes that provide access to green spaces or off-street pathways, providing for safer routes, and serve to reduce traffic pollution and congestion.

Community gardens - creating or upgrading a local public garden amenity that brings social, environmental and economic benefits for the community.

Making community assets more sustainable – increasing the sustainability of community assets, such as the energy performance of buildings or improved surroundings and should include community learning around sustainable build, design and refurbishment practices.

## Policy Context

In February 2005 the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 came into force, with provisions for communities' right to buy. Communities throughout the country have been prompted to consider purchasing local land and property to retain for future local access and use. Subsequent amendments allow communities with a population of up to 10,000 (previously it was a 3,000 limit) to take up the community land purchase provisions of the Act. If 10% of the community agree, an interest in the land can be registered which allows the community first refusal on the purchase of the land should it become available for sale.

The Scottish Executive supports the community sector in delivering better public services in a number of ways, including:

The Futurebuilders Scotland programme, which supports improved public sector procurement and provided funds to support the development of organisations with trading potential;

The draft Social Enterprise Strategy identifies recycling as an opportunity for delivery by the community sector; and

INCREASE (Investment in Community Recycling and Social Enterprise) which provides investment to community organisations engaged in activities that will help to implement the National Waste Plan. A key objective of the INCREASE programme is to enable community-based organisations to become social enterprises and, in so doing, further develop the entire social economy.

The new Scottish Government has stated that: "We will consult on measures to enable new models of community management of facilities within local authority control, such as parks or libraries, to ensure that local people get the best use out of them. We will also consider ways to transfer under-used public assets into community ownership without the need for ministerial approval, where community benefit can be clearly demonstrated."

## 4. Demonstrate Your Capacity And Ability To Undertake The Evaluation On A Scotland-Wide Basis

ERS is a national consultancy with offices throughout the country. The company employs 25 staff, and forms part of Experian Business Strategies Strategy and Research Unit which has a total of around 70 staff. With the exception of one of our community development specialists, this evaluation would involve staff based in our offices in Scotland and the North of England.

**PROJECT DIRECTOR**

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**West Coast Team (Carlisle)**

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Of course, at present, the spatial distribution of projects is unknown, as are their number, type and scale (albeit that the limited evidence so far is of a bias towards rural areas and northern Scotland). Hence, how staff resources will be deployed cannot be anticipated. Importantly though, we have a robust infrastructure and a sufficiently large team that can be deployed flexibly to meet the needs of the evaluation, whatever they might be and to visit projects, wherever they might be – from Govan to Uig. This includes the potential use of video conferencing – we have facilities in our offices in Scotland and the North of England, which provide the opportunity to undertake the evaluation cost-effectively and to minimise its environmental impact.

ERS is currently undertaking work in Scotland for: Communities Scotland, The Prince's Trust, BIG, Skillset and Dumfries & Galloway Council. In addition, colleagues based in our new Edinburgh Office have been operating in Scotland for a number of years. They bring a wealth of experience of conducting evaluation and other consultancy assignments throughout Scotland, including studies for the Scottish Executive, the Scottish Parliament, Communities Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and various LECs and Local Authorities.

In addition, we propose to utilise (and develop) the skills of local community groups to support some of the basic data gathering.  In this way, we will ensure that:

> there are conduits in each locality through which the core evaluation team can be accessed;

> capacity is built in each locality to support ongoing monitoring and self-evaluation;

> fieldwork that can be carried out locally is done locally, being more cost-effective and minimising the environmental impacts of the evaluation;

> full professional support is provided in order to ensure that the quality of the evaluation is maintained;

> local resources are only deployed on appropriate tasks in order to preserve the integrity of the evaluation; and

> suitable payments are made to local groups/people for their input, thereby injecting some of the evaluation resources back into local communities.

# 5. Demonstrate How Your Proposed Design And Methods Are Well-Developed, Appropriate And Meet The Aims And Objectives Of The Evaluation

## Over-Arching Methodological Issues

The methodology is designed to facilitate an evaluation process in line with the aims and objectives set out in the tender brief. It takes an inclusive and transparent approach which matches the over-arching ethos of Government evaluation guidance (for example, DCLG and HM Treasury). It would be our intention to be as flexible as possible and engage in dialogue with BIG as to any additional or alternative techniques that may be appropriate. In the context of a longitudinal study, it is important that the methodology is flexible to accommodate any unexpected opportunities that may arise. ERS is committed to fulfil all the requirements of the tender brief and of this proposal.

There would appear to be a number of potential issues that will need to be considered when delivering the study methodology, in particular:

Length of time of the evaluation;

Appropriate engagement with all participating partners;

Inclusive consultation with a wide range of partners;

Managing expectations of evaluative practice where working alongside delivery;

Establishing plausible links between outputs and outcomes; and

Maintaining focus, given the breadth of the topic.

It is vitally important that partners are aware of the evaluation process and are supportive of its delivery, particularly in relation to making data and documentation available, as well as giving some of their time for discussion with the Study Team.

We recognise the importance of working in close partnership with relevant individuals to facilitate the study and provide regular feedback on key elements of the methodology and emerging findings . A critical element of the methodology will therefore be the establishment of an effective working relationship with officers from BIG and members of any associated evaluation steering group.

In order to facilitate delivery, and as previously described, ERS will field a comprehensive team organised according to appropriate geographies in order to provide an assessment of each project in receipt of GCA funding.

Each member of the team will develop a relationship with a set of projects. The overarching project management and regular contact within and between teams and across the whole study will facilitate analysis and comparisons across the piece. Indeed, common threads, learning and operational efficiencies would be realised through effective project management in line with our ISO 9001 accredited quality control procedures.

All interviewees will be given the option of face-to-face, videoconferenced or telephone interviews, although we envisage making site visits to around one third of successful applicants. All interviews would be conduced by experienced ERS staff.

**Project Initiation and Progress Meetings**

Following appointment, we would welcome an early inception meeting to agree/clarify exact terms of reference for the evaluation. This meeting could also establish working procedures, finalise our approach to the evaluation, set dates for other meetings, establish immediately available management information/reports and facilitate access to contact details for community groups awarded funding.

Thereafter, we would maintain close contact throughout the course of the study, with monthly progress briefings, quarterly meetings with the designated officers/Evaluation Steering Group and telephone/e-mail contact as appropriate. This will be vitally important given the length of the contract.

**Stage 1**

Document Review

The first element of the study involves a thorough assessment of all relevant documentation related to the GCA Programme and projects in receipt of funding. The review of documentation would underpin all subsequent stages and guide the qualitative stakeholder interviews and the selection of baseline indicators. We will review the following as a minimum (please note this is not an exhaustive list):

Application pack information

Criteria against which projects were selected

Minutes of selection meetings

Application forms

Project plans

Clearly, it is important for the evaluation to benefit from other sources of information/other research work and indeed to disseminate its findings to others (see Section 11). We will therefore seek to determine the most appropriate and effective means by which this evaluation can link in with other information providers and research practitioners. In addition, we would keep abreast of changing political and policy contexts and any implications these might have for pursuing an asset-based approach to community development along the lines supported by GCA.

Baseline Setting

Within Stage 1 this is the activity that will require the largest amount of our time, because establishing comprehensive, accurate and meaningful baselines underpins the whole of the evaluation throughout its three stages.

Based on our previous experience of establishing baselines, a review of the above documentation and discussions with key stakeholders, we would establish a suite of indicators in respect of each of the Programme's five target outcomes, covering the four categories (social, economic, environmental and population) described in the invitation to tender. Each project would then be allocated those indicators most appropriate to its circumstances and it would be agreed with them that this would be the basis on which future impacts would be measured. Some examples are presented below:

Communities are stronger, with shared aspirations and the ability to achieve these together – Baseline level of community activity: how many community groups, size of membership, number of volunteers etc.

Communities have services and amenities that meet people's needs better and are more accessible - Baseline level of service provision: range, number, frequency and quality of services delivered by statutory and other agencies;

People have more skills, knowledge and confidence, and opportunities to use these for the benefit of their community - Baseline the socio-economic profile: population, number of people in employment, number of people with qualifications, GVA per capita, number of benefit claimants etc.;

Communities have a more positive impact on the local and global environment – Baseline environmental position: size of buildings/land that is vacant/derelict, percentage of energy drawn from sustainable sources, reduced travel to access remote services etc.; and

Communities are more able to grasp opportunities, and are more enterprising and self-reliant – Baseline GCA applicant: level of income, grant dependency, capacity and resources etc..

Having identified the indicators we would then gather relevant data which would form the baseline for each project. This is likely to involve a combination of official (e.g. ONS) and unofficial (e.g. community groups) sources. We would seek to gather this retrospectively in respect of those projects already awarded GCA funding and upon notification of awards to other groups in future.

Planning for Future Baseline Updates

In order to adequately measure each project's progress, it will be necessary to put in place a monitoring framework. This will incorporate those baseline indicators referred to above in respect of which there is no published data. This framework will be designed to be as useful as possible whilst trying to avoid being burdensome. It will describe what data and other information is to be collected, by whom and how often, as well as offering guidance on how data/other information is to be presented. Insofar as is possible/reasonable, the framework will build on any existing monitoring systems that are already in place.

## Project Interviews

Interviews would be conducted with all Community Groups in receipt of GCA funding. Some of the issues to be explored would be as follows:

Process of project initiation and development;

Whether the local "community" was easy to define and whether it's a widely shared definition;

Scale/type/demography of community involvement relative to size/type/ 'demography' of community as a whole – is it representative of the community or just a clique?;

Description of roles in the project played by different members of the community;

Applicants' plans/strategies in place for strengthening/sustaining involvement;

Types and success of approaches and activities used to encourage involvement from individuals and groups who would otherwise be unlikely to participate;

Perceptions of GCA's scope and purpose;

Planned use/expected achievements of funding;

Any problems with the value placed on the asset pre-acquisition;

Use of Highland and Islands Enterprise/BIG support for organisational development;

Organisational and/or financial support from local authority/other bodies;

Use of funding/procurement of services;

Sources of match funding any difficulties in accessing funding and any support required to identify or access it; and

Exposure of risks and associated responses e.g. through a robust risk management framework.

In respect of each Community Group in receipt of GCA funding, we would propose to carry out initial interviews followed by annual updates.

## Community Consultations

An inherent part of the ABCD approach is empowering residents, so it is crucial that we obtain information from them, to help set the baseline as well as gauge their views more generally. We propose to do this by recruiting and training (where necessary) Peer Consultants amongst a sample of about a third of the projects. These would of course be representative of the allocation of grants, according to spatial distribution, rural/urban split, use of funding etc.

With appropriate support and guidance, Peer Consultants would be involved in helping the ERS Team in a number of ways. At this stage, this will focus on the collection of baseline data, through designing, distributing and collecting questionnaires and recruiting participants for focus groups.

### A Control Group

In order to fully appreciate the added value of GCA funding and the efficiency of its operation, it would be interesting to explore the experiences and attitudes of other community groups to asset-based community development in general and to this programme in particular. We therefore propose to approach Development Trusts Scotland in order to canvass the views of its 97 full members and 27 associate members (other than BIG!) in order to explore relevant issues.

This might be supplemented with a survey of unsuccessful applicants to the GCA fund, in order to gather their views on the application process.

### Reporting and Dissemination

Reporting would be in the form of:

> Monthly progress briefings (in a format to be agreed);
>
> Quarterly progress reports to be tabled at quarterly meetings/Evaluation Steering Group meetings; and
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> An interim report (containing an executive summary, emerging findings, examples of good practice, lessons learned and discussion of key issues)

The basis for reporting and disseminating findings will need to be agreed with BIG (and other stakeholders) in due course. In the meantime, some initial thoughts are set out in Section 11 of this proposal.

All study outputs would be provided in BIG house style in both hard and electronic copy in word and/or .pdf formats.

**Stages 2 and 3**

To a large extent, the methodologies employed in Stage 1 will be repeated in Stages 2 and 3. Consequently, the methodologies outlined above have not been repeated below except where the outcomes will differ.

Baseline Updates

Using published data, information from partner bodies, that collected by the projects themselves and that collected by Peer Consultants, we would update the baseline figures in order to measure progress. Furthermore, we would seek to interpret these changes in order to account for any external influences which may have hindered or facilitated progress. For example, the closure of a local business might have a bigger bearing on many of the indicators than the project itself (reducing employment, encouraging outward migration etc.), whilst a business relocating into an area could account for significant positive changes to the baseline.

Project Interviews

Follow-up interviews with Community Groups would explore the following:

Any views on use of funding (with the benefit of hindsight);

Deviation from costs outlined in the project submission;

Development of the skills/capacity of staff and management committees;

Improved security/stability of the group and the community through asset ownership;

Benefits to the group of enhanced status;

Ability to make better utilisation of the space;

Ability to plan ahead, e.g. expand/diversify their activities.

Ability to experiment with new approaches to meeting the needs of their communities;

Ability to use the asset to raise other funds (e.g. a mortgage) to support further growth;

Appropriateness of scale and duration of funding;

Evidence of replacement of grants with earned income; and

Success in establishing surplus generating enterprises.

Other Stakeholder Interviews

Clearly, it will be important to gather the views of other stakeholders, including:

BIG Programme staff;

Highlands and Islands Enterprise;

Each of the other delivery partners (Highlands and Islands Community Energy

Company,  Scottish Enterprise, Social Investment Scotland, Community

Enterprise in Strathclyde, Forth Sector);

Others providing advisory support to the HIE Consortium (Communities

Scotland,  Development Trusts Association Scotland, Greenspace Scotland);

and

local authorities covering the areas in which GCA has been awarded.

In addition to some of the issues listed above, interviews would cover the following:

Relationships between different bodies involved in the project;

Ability of public sector service providers to better engage with local people,

better deliver their services locally and better understand the needs of local

people;

Any improvements in the co-ordination of service provision;

Views on an asset-based approach to community development within changing

political and policy contexts over time; and

Views on the delivery contract.

Community Consultations

Effective consultation with local beneficiaries is an essential component of the
evaluation methodology enabling the study team to assess the real impact of the
GCA funding on the lives of residents within each area. In addition, the in-depth
qualitative nature of a number of consultation techniques can facilitate the production
of beneficiary case studies to provide tangible evidence of impact to local
stakeholders and existing/potential funding bodies.

Given the individual nature of the projects in receipt of funding, it is likely to be
necessary to take an individualised approach to broader consultation.  Nevertheless,
consultation is likely to involve a combination of the following techniques:

*Interviews*    with local people who have been directly involved in project

development (in addition to the project leads previously interviewed);

*Focus groups* with users of facilities/services would provide an opportunity to explore the extent to which projects have helped address issues with which residents are confronted. They could involve the use of a range of interactive techniques that we have deployed in the past. Incentives to attend can also be provided where required.

*Broader discussions* involving attendance at meetings by ERS staff to obtain the views of local people not closely involved in the project. Support would be sought to identify the dates and times of meetings held by local community groups and organisations and request that ERS staff might attend and consult other attendees, as appropriate.

*Survey of Residents* in order to update the baseline position, identifying any soft and hard skills developed, in- and out-flow of resident participants, changes in perceptions/optimism/self confidence etc.

As mentioned above, the appropriateness of using these mechanisms will be looked at in the context of each project/locality, to ensure that local communities are engaged in the most effective and efficient manner. Once again, we would seek to deploy Peer Consultants, as appropriate.

Mapping

Whilst the quantitative and qualitative analysis will generate valuable findings, we believe there would be value in illustrating some of the impacts of GCA investments through GIS mapping. Using multi-layered analysis, we can provide maps showing the locations of GCA investments, differentiated according to the 3 types of investment and the uses to which they have been put and then relate these investments to a range of socio-economic indicators, such as population densities, IMD (or individual domain) scores etc.

In addition, and in order to better illustrate the findings from the baseline updates, we can map changes to show where and in respect of what types of investment, greatest progress has been made. Furthermore, we can undertake some comparative mapping for the control group to seek to establish the added value of GCA investments.

This mapping would be undertaken by colleagues within our Spatial Analytics Team using Micromarketer Generation3 – Experian's suite of geographical analysis software.

Reporting and Dissemination

The basis for reporting and disseminating findings will need to be agreed with BIG (and other stakeholders) in due course. In the meantime, some initial thoughts are set out in Section 11 of this proposal.

All of the quantitative and qualitative evidence would be brought together in the overall assessment of GCA funding, and we would expect the report to cover the following:

> Benefits of funding in social terms – providing the community with a new 'heart'.
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> Benefits of funding in economic terms – generating jobs and income;
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> Benefits of funding in environmental terms – utilising derelict land/buildings;
>
> The sustainability of each of these benefits;
>
> Evidence of any negative effects;
>
> Evidence of common benefits/disadvantages across different projects or in urban/rural areas specifically;
>
> Examples of innovation and excellence;
>
> Views on the merits of the asset-based approach to community development;
>
> Key factors driving successful community ownership;
>
> Benefits of contracting out delivery; and
>
> Other lessons for future BIG programmes.

Reporting would be in the form of:

> Monthly progress briefings (in a format to be agreed);
>
> Quarterly progress reports to be tabled at quarterly meetings/Evaluation Steering Group meetings.
>
> A second interim report (containing an executive summary, emerging findings, examples of good practice, lessons learned and discussion of key issues)
>
> A final report to be published under the name of the Big Lottery Fund which addresses all the areas covered in the evaluation and includes an Executive Summary.

All study outputs would be provided in BIG house style in both hard and electronic copy in word and/or .pdf formats.

**6.  Demonstrate Your Experience Of Undertaking Longer Term Evaluations And The Use Of Indicators To Measure Social And Other Impacts Over Time**

**Longer Term Evaluations**

ERS offers substantial experience of conducting longitudinal evaluations and analyses of a variety of capital and revenue projects in urban and rural communities across the UK.  The examples below include national studies of up to 3 years duration and sub-national studies lasting more than 12 months.

**National Studies**

Evaluation of Living Landmarks (Development Funding Phase), BIG

Evaluation of What Money Means, Personal Finance Education Group

Evaluation of Training Linked to Production, Skillset

Third Year Monitoring & Evaluation of REACT Programme, Countryside Agency

Evaluation of the Team Programme, The Prince's Trust

Evaluation of Artists Insights Programme, Arts Council England

Evaluation of NVQ Level 3, LSC

Evaluation of Centres of Vocational Excellence, LSC

Evaluation of Volcom Sector Training Pilot, LSC

Evaluation of Cultural Sector Training Pilot, LSC

Evaluation of Group Training Associations, DfES

Evaluation of Right to Time Off for Study and Training, DfES

Evaluation of Modern Apprenticeships, DfEE

**Sub-National Studies**

Evaluation of Liveability Theme, Sheffield City Council

Evaluation of Projects and Programme, Preston Road NDC (Hull)

Evaluation of Projects and Programme, Bridge NDC (Haringey)

Evaluation of Relocation of GLOSCAT, South West RDA

Evaluation of Start-Up, Prince's Trust East Midlands

**Measuring Social and Other Impacts**

As might be expected, most of the examples above included a need to measure social and other impacts.  In addition, ERS was commissioned by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit at DCLG to deliver the largest of the pilots under its Supporting Evidence for Local Delivery (SELD) programme.  Through the Programme ERS provided advice and guidance to neighbourhood renewal practitioners on their use of data to measure the economic, social and environmental impacts of their interventions in local areas.  In addition, ERS produced guides to using data on measuring changes in a variety of Health, Worklessness and Enterprise indicators, which were adopted on a national basis.

In addition, colleagues in Experian provide assess to **Mosaic Public Sector** **TM**, a consumer segmentation system which classifies all residents in the UK into 61 types, aggregated into 11 groups. The classification paints a rich picture of UK society in terms of their socio-demographics, lifestyles, culture and behaviour.

Some 400 data variables are used to build Mosaic. Just over half (54%) of the data used is sourced from the 2001 Census. The remaining 46% is derived from Experian's Consumer Segmentation Database, which provides coverage of the UK's 46 million adult residents and 23 million households. It includes the edited Electoral Roll, Experian's Lifestyle Survey information and Consumer Credit Activity, alongside the Post Office Address File, Shareholders Register, House Price and Council Tax information and ONS local area statistics. Additional data can also be appended to **Mosaic Public Sector,** **TM**, in particular, data from the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), British Crime Survey, Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), the Health Survey for England and the Pupil Level Annual School Census.

# 7. Demonstrate A Clear And Realistic Project Plan Showing The Tasks For Each Stage Of The Evaluation And The Roles And Responsibilities Of Each Member Of The Team

The evaluation will be in three stages, as follows (timings subject to variation):

*Stage 1 (November 2007 – March 2009)*

Agree social, economic and environmental baseline indicators;

Select a basket of the above applicable to each project;

Collect data in respect of each project;

Identify key factors in the process of communities initiating and developing their project ideas; and

Evaluate the delivery of the contract by the Highland and Islands Enterprise-led consortium.

*Stage 2 (April 2009 – March 2011)*

Update baseline indicators and compare with baseline positions;

Gather other evidence (including the views of stakeholders) to assess the social, economic and environmental impacts of projects;

Review the process of communities developing and sustaining their project ideas; and

Evaluate the delivery of the contract by the Highland and Islands Enterprise-led consortium.

*Stage 3 (April 2011 – March 2012)*

Update baseline indicators and compare with baseline positions;

Gather other evidence (including the views of stakeholders) to assess the social, economic and environmental impacts of projects; and

Review the process of communities sustaining their project ideas.

A more detailed project plan can be found in Section 9 of this proposal.

**Roles and Responsibilities of Team Members**

**Stage 1**

**Team Members   Roles   Responsibilities**

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**Stages 2 and 3**
**Team Members Roles Responsibilities**

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## 8. Demonstrate That Your Team Members Have The Full Range Of Research And Technical Skills And Experience Required By The Evaluation

**Collective Experience**

The ERS team offers a wealth of experience, not just in consultancy but also through previous involvement and employment in the public, private and voluntary sectors. The team has hands-on experience of working within the fields of economic and community development. Our evaluation work ranges from individual project level evaluations to rolling programme level evaluations aimed at supporting the subsequent delivery of regeneration and community development initiatives.

ERS has experience of working with clients in the voluntary, community and public sectors spanning the past 13 years. Indeed, 95% of ERS' business involves conducting evaluation and research amongst these sectors. We have conducted assignments on behalf of government departments, regional development agencies, regional government offices, local strategic partnerships, regeneration partnerships, local authorities, other public bodies (LSC, Connexions, PCTs etc.), voluntary bodies and a range of private sector clients. In recognition of the quality of our work and for work carried out for voluntary and community groups without charge, in 2004 ERS was awarded the Service Sector in the Community Award by Business in the Community.

ERS takes a positive and supportive approach to evaluation, with an emphasis on lessons learned and highlighting good practice in order to improve the prospects for achieving key outcomes. We are experienced in delivering large and complex national evaluation studies for clients including Arts Council England, Big Lottery Fund, Countryside Agency, DfES, LSC and The Prince's Trust, maintaining our enthusiasm and commitment to the task throughout its lifetime.

In addition to longitudinal evaluation experience, as previously described, ERS has a wealth of experience of evaluating community-based programmes and projects. This has included:

Evaluations/strategy development for 23 of the 39 NDCs nationally;

More than 40 SRB and NRF programme evaluations;

Evaluations of Objective 2 ERDF/ESF Programmes and Community Initiatives;

Evaluations of Neighbourhood Management Pilots and Housing Market Renewal
  Pathfinders; and

Evaluations of Investing in Communities programmes.

Furthermore, the ERS team has experience of a range of other studies of relevance
in this context, as detailed below.

**Community Buildings**

Gateway Feasibility Study, Heddon on the Wall Parish Council

Lynemouth Resource Centre Business Plan, ProHelp

Pennywell Community Centre Redevelopment Report, Sunderland City Council

Owton Rossmere Community Centre Business Plan, Hartlepool Partnership

East Community Association Business Plan, Sunderland NDC

Richmond Community Building Audit, Richmond Town Centre Forum

Wrexham Community Building Audit and Strategy Development, Northern
  Marches Cymru

Community Buildings Audit, Borough of Poole

Bangladeshi Centre Development Plan for BoTM NDC (Sunderland)

Feasibility study of a 'community mall' in the Scottish Borders

Feasibility study and outline business plan for the redevelopment of the Old
  School at Fort William for grant funding under the Architectural Heritage Fund

Options appraisal, business planning, funding and project management support
  for Blairtummock House, Glasgow

Business planning, funding and project management support for Gunsgreen
  House, Eyemouth

Options Appraisal for Workington Hall and Curwen Park

Options Appraisal and Feasibility Study for Stornoway Town Hall

Kirkby Stephen East Station - Options Appraisal and Feasibility Study

**Community Enterprise**

Identifying Best Practice in Enterprise Capability, EMDA

Business Support Service Evaluation, Devonport Community Regeneration

Developing Rural Social Enterprise in North Yorkshire, UnLtd

Start Up with The Prince's Trust, The Prince's Trust East Midlands

Further Education Enterprise Centres, Business Link Tyne and Wear

Business Profiling and Managed Workspace, Newcastle NDC

Community Based Enterprises Evaluation, Newcastle NDC

Yours and Mine Community Café Evaluation, Newcastle NDC

U Can 2 Evaluation, Newcastle NDC

East End and Hendon Community Enterprise Zones, Sunderland NDC

Business Renaissance Programme, Radford & Hyson Green NDC

Case Study Initiatives, London Skills & Employment Board

Research into the need for an Enterprise Development Service for educators and
enterprise providers in the East Midlands, EMDA

Strategic Review of Regional Business Link Provision, Yorkshire ForwardLocal
Enterprise Growth Initiative - Business Support Study, County Durham

Evaluation of SE Borders Ettrick Riverside Project, involving the regeneration of
former mill buildings in Selkirk into SME managed workspace

Appraisal of a managed workspace unit for micro-enterprises powered by
hydrogen for Business Environment Partnership and Scottish Enterprise

Evaluation of West Lothian Council's Business Support Service

Evaluation of Scottish Enterprise Lanarkshire's Innovation Support Programme

Evaluation of Scottish Enterprise Tayside's Expert Support Programme

Evaluation for Scottish Enterprise of Support to High Growth Start-ups

LEGI Round 2 Bid: Baseline, KPI and Target Development, North Tyneside MBC

Evaluation of Grow Our Own, SEEDA

LEGI Business Survey, South Tyneside Council

LEGI Round 2 Bid: Evidence Base Development, Dudley MBC

Review of Successful LEGI Round 1 Bids: Lessons, Hartlepool BC

LEGI Guidance Note and workshops, DCLG

Evidence Base Data Analysis for the 3 Cities LEGI Round 2 Bid, Leicester City
Council

**Development of Evaluation/Impact Frameworks**

Developing Performance Indicators for Glasgow's New Economic Strategy

Economic and community impact of the development of renewables projects in
the Western Isles across onshore/offshore wind, wave, tidal and community
projects

Feasibility of path networks around Stranraer and Dumfries to establish
performance indicators against which the impact of paths could be measured

Appraisal of HLF-funded Townscape Heritage Initiative for Annan Town Centre

Monitoring of Scottish Science Centre transitional funding from the Scottish
    Executive

Monitoring of the Kelvingrove New Century Project

Monitoring of the Trades Hall and Ingram Street Tearooms in Glasgow

Project monitoring for Heritage Lottery Fund project Newport and Pontypool

Financial review and monitoring of Llangollen Railway

Herbert Art Gallery and RAF Cosford – HLF West Midlands Assessments

Painswick Rococco Garden, Project Limelight, Geevor Tin Mine and Jet Age
    Museum - HLF South West Assessments

Four year monitoring of seven Wildlife Trust project

Economic Impact Study of the relocation of GLOSCAT, South West RDA

Big Lottery Fund, Evaluation of the Living Landmarks Programme

Strategic Programme Review, New Cross Gate NDC

Development and Integration of NRF 'Narrowing The Gap' Targets Into Derby's
    LAA, Derby City Council

Community Strategy and LAA development, Slough LSP

Framework for Baseline Development and Review, West Lakes Renaissance


**Individual Experience**


The team has been assembled on the basis of the skills and experience required to
undertake this study, in order to provide appropriate capacity to deliver the study to
required timescales and budgets

*PERSONSAL INFORMATION HAS BEEN REMOVED.*

Project Director

West Coast Team

### 9. Demonstrate Your Capacity And Availability Of Resources To Carry Out The Evaluation Within The Timescale, Or, If Working In Partnership, How Each Organisation Has The Capacity To Fulfil Its Role And Ensure You Define The Roles Of Each Partner

ERS is a wholly owned subsidiary of Experian plc, a FTSE Top 100 company. The company employs 25 staff, and forms part of Experian Business Strategies Strategy and Research Unit which has a total of around 70 staff. This capacity is in turn supplemented by colleagues within Experian's Spatial Analytics Team.

Quite deliberately, we have put forward a large team, conscious that over the period of the evaluation there is potential for staff absences and some staff turnover. Even though staff absences through sickness are extremely low at ERS (averaging 1 day per year amongst the proposed team), there is a need to cover annual leave. In addition, although staff turnover at ERS over the past 5 years (in terms of leavers) only averages between 1 and 2 people a year, it would be prudent to plan for the possibility that this might include 1 or 2 members of the study team over a 6 year period. There is therefore sufficient capacity and flexibility in the team that we have assembled to ensure that in the event of any staff absences or leavers, their responsibilities can be discharged by other members of the team.

All of those working on the evaluation will be 'permanent' employees of ERS/Experian, with no use of associates or subcontractors. In this context, please note that whilst this evaluation is being led by ERS staff that colleagues within Experian possess similar sorts of skills and are housed within the same division, other than the Spatial Analytics Team which is in an adjacent division. To all intents and purposes this is a single team, the members of which have been working together since ERS was acquired by Experian nearly a year ago.

In respect of how activities will be carried out successfully within the allotted timescale, the Gantt Charts below outline the project plan for each of the three stages.

| STAGE 1 | 2007 | | | | | | | | | | | | 2008 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |

**Project initiation**

**Monthly briefings**

**Quarterly progress reports**

**Design of research materials**

**Data collection and fieldwork**

**Data analysis/ interpretation**

**Report writing and production**

**Draft interim report**

**Report feedback**

**Final interim report**

**Dissemination/ learning events\***

* nb these would extend beyond the period of Stage 1, into the Spring of 2009

*Growing Community Assets Evaluation (Scotland)  37*

| **STAGE 2** | 2009 | 2010 2011 |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M | |

**Monthly briefings**

**Quarterly progress reports**

**Data collection and fieldwork**

**Data analysis/ interpretation**

**Report writing and production**

**Draft second interim report**

**Report feedback**

**Final second interim report**

**Dissemination/ learning events\***

    \* nb these would extend beyond the period of Stage 2, into the Spring of 2011

| STAGE 3 | 2011 | 2012 |
|---|---|---|
| | A M J J A S O N D | J F M A M J |
| **Monthly briefings** | | |
| **Quarterly progress reports** | | |
| **Data collection and fieldwork** | | |
| **Data analysis/ interpretation** | | |
| **Report writing and production** | | |
| **Draft final report** | | |
| **Report feedback** | | |
| **Final report** | | |
| **Dissemination/ learning events** | | |

# 10. Demonstrate Effective Arrangements For Project Management, Team Support, Quality Assurance And Delivery Of Evaluation Outputs

ERS recognises the importance of quality in all areas of work. To maintain high standards of quality, ERS utilises an Internal Quality Control Procedure, underpinned by the principle of customer satisfaction. In addition, the individual responsible for project management (Keith Burge, in this instance) must have the requisite skills, knowledge and experience to be able to perform this role. As Head of ERS and with more than 20 years relevant experience in this field, Keith is extremely well placed to provide support to other members of the team and to ensure that similar support is extended to Peer Consultants. He will also ensure that the evaluation is delivered in line with the company's ISO 9001 accredited QA procedures and that all evaluation outputs are delivered to the requisite quality and within agreed timescales.

The responsibilities of the Project Director (Keith Burge) include:

Leading on the preparations of this proposal;

Ensuring adherence to the specification throughout all areas of the project;

Co-ordinating the delivery of project outputs within the agreed time-scale;

Liaison with the appointing group and any sub-groups throughout the project; and

Principal authorship of the final report.

The internal quality procedures for ERS also cover the following areas:

## *Quality Control in Data Gathering*

All data gathering is subject to appropriate quality procedures. For example, where relevant, we carry out procedures as outlined below:

Large scale secondary data: data set samples are tested for accuracy, relevance and reliability. All data is checked for accurate sourcing.

Face to face interviews: the structure of any interviews will be determined by the Project Manager, with the discussion topics falling in line with the issues set out in the proposal in the section on study objectives. Information will be collated in advance of interviews in order that interviewers are well prepared and can engage in informed discussions.

Structured interviews/telephone interviews utilise a structured survey instrument to ensure conformity of questioning and to ensure adherence to any outline previously agreed with the client.

Focus Groups: ERS staff are trained in the facilitation of focus groups. Participants are provided with a brief beforehand to enhance their contribution. All opinions are regarded as valid. Flip charts are used to record discussion, and 'floating facilitators' check the recording accuracy.

In addition, for all projects involving interviews, the study team will meet at regular intervals throughout the interviewing period in order to ensure that their approach remains consistent and to alert colleagues to possible new lines of questioning, based on the outcomes of interviews undertaken.

### *Quality Control in Analysis*

For statistical analysis of secondary data sources, samples of analysed data are tested for error in calculation, accuracy of recording and appropriateness of presentation.

For interviews and other primary data collection procedures, quality control involves ensuring that the interview schedule has been adhered to and that the final write-up accurately reflects the draft interview notes (which are stored as primary data).

For focus groups, ERS staff refer back to the flip chart notes (kept as primary data) to ensure recording accuracy.

### *Quality Control in Report Writing/Drafting*

All draft and final reports are checked by an ERS research team member to ensure that the text is well written, accurately reflects the work done, conforms to any format requested by the client, and is free from typographical and presentational errors.

### *Quality Control in Final Outputs*

In conjunction with the Project Manager, Final Reports are scrutinised by the Managing Director prior to handing over to the client. This check provides a further overall quality control and verifies that the original project tender has been complied with.

## *Quality Control in Meetings*

ERS maintains close client contact (usually via the client project steering group or other appropriate body) on a formally agreed or informal basis. ERS is always willing to keep clients fully up-to-date with project progress, either through meeting, telephone enquiry or in writing. Internally, ERS maintains control over all current research projects through formal weekly progress meetings.

## *Quality Control in Costs*

ERS has a well-developed procedure for costing projects as accurately as possible. In the event that any form of sub-contracting is required (for example, when dealing with large volume report reproduction), this will be carried out in a cost-effective manner. Where applicable, several quotations will be obtained to ensure best value.

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ERS has achieved the international standard ISO 9001 which is a recognised standard for the quality management of businesses. It applies to the processes that create and control the products and services an organisation supplies. This approval is rare for consultancies within the field of economic development and regeneration.

ERS is an Investor in People and firmly believes in the 4 basic principles of IiP: commitment; planning; action; and evaluation. ERS is also an equal opportunities employer and is committed to equality of opportunity in all aspects of the manner in which it conducts its business

## Data Protection

In addition, we recognise that, if successful, we will have access to policy papers and internal documentation in addition to confidential data collected by BIG and HIE. ERS is registered under the Data Protection Act (certificate available on request).

## 11. Demonstrate Well-Considered Plans For Dissemination Of The Evaluation Findings

We recognise that BIG is committed to undertake evaluation and research to: "enable it to improve funding impacts and processes; to promote wider sharing of such learning in order to improve practice and influence policy; and to support public accountability" [2].

We support this in its entirety and are committed to deliver our evaluation work in such a way as to facilitate positive learning for the organisation and its partners.

Indeed, it is recognised that there are numerous audiences for the evaluation, including BIG Board members, policy makers and government partners, researchers, project sponsors/managers and local communities. As such, we would value the opportunity to work closely with the BIG Team in order to determine appropriate dissemination formats and structures.

In this context, whilst we recognise that the best way to minimise additional costs (financial and environmental) would be to focus on a largely electronic dissemination (emailing reports and making them available on websites) this approach could discriminate against those without ready access to ICT facilities and/or not competent in their use. In particular, there is a danger of discriminating against small community groups in this regard. We are therefore mindful of the fact that presentations and printed reports/executive summaries will have a key role to play.

In addition, it is vital that the findings are effectively communicated to policy makers in order to ensure that the positive and negative experiences of community groups are recognised and, insofar as is possible, are addressed. Hence, there may well be merit in organising presentations to policy makers specifically and in producing a version of the final report/executive summary that is customised to the interests of this group.

A summary dissemination plan is provided overleaf. It would be our intention to work this up in much more detail as the evaluation progresses.

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[2] http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/er_res_learning_strategy_uk.pdf

**Task  Suggested Approach  Timescale**

| Task | Suggested Approach | Timescale |
|---|---|---|
| Notification of evaluation process | Short feature on BIG website and in any relevant BIG newsletters.<br><br>Email to all project leads and key partners.<br><br>Initial notification to relevant press (e.g. Regeneration and Renewal and New Start). | Nov 2007 |
| Stage 1 report | Full report with executive summary (paper and electronic copies) submitted to BIG, HIE and other key stakeholders.<br><br>Electronic version of executive summary to be emailed to appropriate audiences, including community groups (where feasible).<br><br>Report to be available via BIG website.<br><br>Paper copy of executive summary to be mailed to appropriate audiences, including community groups, with possible variations according to the interests of each audience.<br><br>Inclusion in any relevant BIG newsletters/publications.<br><br>Notification to relevant press (e.g. Regeneration and Renewal and New Start). | March 2009 |
| Presentation of Stage 1 report findings | Presentations to:<br><br>Evaluation Steering Group<br><br>GCA Consortium<br><br>BIG Board<br><br>Scotland Committee members<br><br>Volcom representative bodies<br><br>Researchers<br><br>Projects and partners in the Highlands & Islands<br><br>Projects and partners in western Scotland<br><br>Projects and partners in eastern Scotland | April 2009 – July 2009 |

| Task | Suggested Approach | Timescale |
|---|---|---|
|  | Full report with executive summary (paper and electronic copies) submitted to BIG, HIE and other key stakeholders. |  |
|  | Electronic version of executive summary to be emailed to appropriate audiences, including community groups (where feasible). |  |
|  | Report to be available via BIG website. |  |
| Stage 2 report | Paper copy of executive summary to be mailed to appropriate audiences, including community groups, with possible variations according to the interests of each audience. | March 2009 |
|  | Inclusion in any relevant BIG newsletters/publications. |  |
|  | Notification to relevant press (e.g. Regeneration and Renewal and New Start). |  |
|  | Presentations to: |  |
|  | Evaluation Steering Group |  |
|  | GCA Consortium |  |
|  | BIG Board |  |
|  | Scotland Committee members |  |
| Presentation of Stage 2 report findings | Volcom representative bodies | April 2009 – July 2009 |
|  | Researchers |  |
|  | Projects and partners in the Highlands & Islands |  |
|  | Projects and partners in western Scotland |  |
|  | Projects and partners in eastern Scotland |  |
|  | Policy makers in Scottish Government, DCLG and other relevant bodies |  |

**Task  Suggested Approach  Timescale**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Full report with executive summary (paper and electronic copies) submitted to BIG, HIE and other key stakeholders. | |
| | Electronic version of executive summary to be emailed to appropriate audiences, including community groups (where feasible). | |
| | Report to be available via BIG website. | |
| Final report | Paper copy of executive summary to be mailed to appropriate audiences, including community groups, with possible variations according to the interests of each audience. | March 2012 |
| | Inclusion in any relevant BIG newsletters/publications. | |
| | Notification to relevant press (e.g. Regeneration and Renewal and New Start). | |
| | Presentations to: | |
| | Evaluation Steering Group | |
| | GCA Consortium | |
| | BIG Board | |
| | Scotland Committee members | |
| Presentation of final report findings | Volcom representative bodies | April 2012 – June 2012 |
| | Researchers | |
| | Projects and partners in the Highlands & Islands | |
| | Projects and partners in western Scotland | |
| | Projects and partners in eastern Scotland | |
| | Policy makers in Scottish Government, DCLG and other relevant bodies | |

In addition to staff time, a budget of £10,000 has been set aside for dissemination.

## 12. Demonstrate Distinctive Elements Or A Creative Approach In Your Proposal Or Otherwise Add Value To The Delivery Of The Evaluation

ERS takes a positive and supportive approach to evaluation, with an emphasis on lessons learned and highlighting good practice in order to improve the prospects for achieving key outcomes. We are experienced in delivering long-term evaluation studies, maintaining our enthusiasm and commitment to the task throughout its lifetime.

Our approach has been designed to meet all of the requirements in the tender brief and, wherever possible, to add value to the process, specifically through:

Commitment to interview each of the projects receiving GCA awards;

Commitment to engage with community interests in each of these localities;

Commitment to spend a significant amount on-site within local communities;

Provision of case studies to highlight best practice;

Recruitment of Peer Consultants – re-investing around 10% of the evaluation budget in local communities;

Development of a Control Group;

A survey of community groups not awarded GCA funding;

Bringing to bear unrivalled GIS mapping expertise;

Assessment of value for money in utilising GCA funding;

Careful deployment of team members from each of the staff categories to maximise efficiency and cost effectiveness;

Application of our considerable relevant evaluation experience;

Pegging our professional fees for the duration of the contract; and

A carefully considered approach to dissemination of findings.

### 13. Demonstrate Your Overall Charges Offer Good Value And Costs Are Appropriately Distributed Between Different Elements Of The Evaluation

Information redacted under Section 43

## 14. Demonstrate Your Record Of Producing High Quality Research Reports To Support Policy And Practice Development

ERS has a demonstrable track record of producing high quality, accessible and useful reports from which to glean key lessons and recommendations for future delivery. Our work involves developing practical solutions for clients by adopting a professional, innovative and responsive approach, and delivering results that exceed clients' expectations in terms of quality and value for money.

Each evaluation is a valuable working document providing clear answers to key questions, and producing comprehensive recommendations for future activities, some examples of which are presented below.

| Client | Study | Policy and practice outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| Countryside Agency | REACT Programme: Third Year Monitoring and Final Evaluation | The study demonstrated how environmentally-led regeneration can be delivered successfully using the community forestry approach within existing, government sponsored ABIs, generating a range of economic and social outcomes. |
| LSC National Office | Evaluation of CoVE Capital Modernisation Fund | This evaluation demonstrated to the LSC the circumstances in which capital investments had generated the best returns, in respect of both outputs and outcomes, thereby informing a re-definition of future investment criteria. |
| LSC National Office | Evaluation of Volcom Sector Training Pilot | This study informed LSC attitudes to supporting skills development in the Volcom sector. |
| LSC National Office | Evaluation of Cultural Sector Training Pilot | This study informed LSC attitudes to supporting skills development in the arts, culture and heritage sectors. |
| Arts Council England | Evaluation of Artists' Insights | The findings informed organisational management changes, approaches to monitoring and evaluation and strategic direction. |
| Evaluation of Group Training Associations | DfES | This study offered DfES the first ever insight into the outputs and outcomes achieved by this particular group of training providers and in doing so helped inform decisions on future funding. |
| Communities Scotland | Thematic Study into openness and accessibility of social landlords | Communities Scotland is using the report's recommendations and good practice pointers to enhance the regulatory framework and assist landlords reviewing this service area. |

**Client  Study  Policy and practice outcomes**

| Client | Study | Policy and practice outcomes |
|---|---|---|
| EMDA East Midlands | Enterprise Skills | Following a detailed feasibility study, the client has formed a high level 'Task and Finish' group to develop enterprise capability policy in the region, and have re-commissioned ERS to undertake further research in support. |
| Renaissance East Midlands | Consultations with Teachers, Children and Young People to inform Renaissance East Midlands Business Plan | The findings from the study enabled the prioritisation of the development of museum learning services across the East Midlands to create a comprehensive museum service for children and young people, including the identification of needs not currently being met in order to increase the use of museums by schools, children and young people. |
| Coventry NDC | Evaluation and Forward Strategy for the Workshop | Following our study, the client refocused its needs for the project, and successfully re-tendered the project with a new provider, whilst keeping the core delivery team in place. |
| Sheffield City Council | Evaluation of Liveability Theme | The study has led to changes in approaches to community-based activities designed to improve local environments for the benefit of residents within deprived areas. |
| Preston Road NDC (Hull) | Evaluation of Projects and Programme | The study findings led to increases and decreases in funding to certain activities, depending on their effectiveness and alignment with wider strategies. |
| Bridge NDC (Haringey) | Evaluation of Projects and Programme | The study findings led to increases and decreases in funding to certain activities, depending on their effectiveness and alignment with wider strategies. |
| Northern Marches Cymru | Community Building Audit and Strategy Development | As a result of the study, a new approach to developing, re-furbishing and supporting community facilities has evolved. |

**Schedule of Costs**

Information redacted under Section 43

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**Part I – Declaration**

Dear Big Lottery Fund

**CONTRACT FOR EVALUATION OF GCA (SCOTLAND)**

Having examined the proposed Contract comprising.

We do hereby offer to enter into a Contract with THE FUND on the terms and conditions in the said Contract, subject only to Bidder Qualifications as may be stipulated in the Form of Tender Part II.

We undertake to keep the Tender open for acceptance by THE FUND for a period of sixty

(60) days from the return date.

We declare that this is a bona fide Tender, intended to be competitive, and that we have not fixed or adjusted the amount of the Tender by, or under, or in accordance with, any agreement or arrangement with any other person.  We further declare that we have not done, and we undertake that we will not do, any of the following acts prior to award of this Contract:

    a)  Collude with any third party to fix the price of any number of Tenders for this Contract;

    b)  Offer, pay, or agree to pay any sum of money or consideration directly or indirectly to any person for doing, having done, or promising to be done, any act or thing of the sort described herein and above.

We confirm that our Parent Company has signed the Parent Company Guarantee, Form of Tender Part III.

Unless and until a formal Contract has been executed by us both, your written acceptance of this Tender with all its enclosures shall constitute a binding Contract between us.  We understand that you are not bound to accept the lowest priced, or any, Tender.

Signed:

Date:    2 November 2007

Name:   Keith Burge

In the capacity of:   Head of ERS

Duly authorised to sign tenders for and on behalf of:  ERS Ltd.

**CONTRACT FOR EVALUATION OF GCA (SCOTLAND)**

| Clause Reference | Details of Qualification | Cost Adjustment (£) |
|---|---|---|
| If the Contractor shall in any respect fail to perform the said obligations contained in the Contract or commits any breach thereof we shall ourselves perform on simple demand by THE FUND, or take whatever steps may be necessary to achieve performance of the obligations under the Contract of the Contractor, and shall indemnify and keep indemnified the Authority against any loss, damages, costs and expenses howsoever arising from the said failure or breach for which the Contractor may be liable; | Although our parent company has signed the letter of authority, they would like to qualify their agreement to clause 2, placing unlimited liability on the contractor.<br><br>If awarded the contract we would wish to discuss a more proportionate arrangement, whereby the extent of liability is related to the size of the contract. | |

Dear Big Lottery Fund

**Contract for the Evaluation of Growing Community Assets (Scotland)**

With reference to the Tender for the above services submitted by ERS Ltd (hereinafter referred to as "the Contractor"), as a condition precedent for and in consideration of the Big Lottery Fund (a non departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department of Culture Media & Sport) (hereinafter referred to as "THE FUND") entering into a contract (hereinafter referred to as "the Contract") with the Contractor for the above services, we, as the Contractor's ultimate holding company do hereby enter into the following unconditional and irrevocable undertakings with THE FUND. These undertakings being on condition that THE FUND enters into the Contract with the Contractor for the above services and in consideration of the same:

1.  The Contractor shall perform all its obligations contained in the Contract;

2.  If the Contractor shall in any respect fail to perform the said obligations contained in the Contract or commits any breach thereof we shall ourselves perform on simple demand by THE FUND, or take whatever steps may be necessary to achieve performance of the obligations under the Contract of the Contractor, and shall indemnify and keep indemnified the Authority against any loss, damages, costs and expenses howsoever arising from the said failure or breach for which the Contractor may be liable;

3.  We shall not be discharged or released from our undertakings hereunder by any waiver or forbearance by THE FUND, whether as to payment, time, performance or otherwise;

4.  This guarantee shall be unconditional and irrevocable and shall continue in force, notwithstanding any variations or additions to or deletions from the scope of services to be performed under the Contract, until all the Contractor's obligations there under have been performed; and,

5.  This document shall be construed and take effect in accordance with English Law and, furthermore, we submit to the jurisdiction of the English Courts.

Yours faithfully

Signed:

Date: 31. 10. 07

Name: C P H BURTON

in the capacity of: M.D. EBS DIVISION

duly authorised to sign tenders for and on behalf of:: EXPERIAN LTD

*Part IV*

**Bidder's Details**

1. **Registered Company Name:**

   Economic Research Services Ltd.

2. **Company Registration Number:**

   2937576

3. **Address(s):**

   16 Rutland Square

   Edinburgh

   EH1 2BB

4. Tele: 0131 228 8030

5. Fax: 0131 228 8040

6. Email: info@ers.org.uk

7. **Main Operational address for the service:**

   **As above**

8. **Address for all contractual correspondence –**

   As above

9. **Address for all service management correspondence**

   As above

10. **Contacts:**

**a. Responsible Person for the Contract**

Keith Burge

Tele: 0191 244 6102

Fax: 0191 244 6101

Mobile: 07740 879070

Email:        *k@xu*                    *k*

**b.  Responsible Person for the Service:**

As above

Tele:

Fax:

Mobile

Email:

**11.  VAT registration Number (if applicable)**

621445761

**12.  Payment Details**

Personal Information Removed