

Organisation Name		Reference code
Konnect Communities CIC		2022-11-YO31
Organisation Address		
Cardrew House, Cardrew Way Redruth Cornwall TR15 1SP UK		
Website Address		
https://www.konnect-communities.co.uk/		
Type of organisation? (tick all that apply and complete relevant details)		
Charity	Registered Charity Number	Date Registered
No		
Community Interest Company	Registered Companies House Number	Date Registered
Yes	8896465	2014
Social Enterprise	Social Enterprise Mark Awarded Yes/No	Date Awarded
Yes	No	
Grant Summary		
To make a significant positive impact to the lives of 20 young people in Cornwall with a criminal conviction, including looked after young people, through providing long-term, bespoke, face-to-face, 1-2-1 mentoring to support them into secure employment and reduce re-offending.		
Please describe the needs that this project will address		
<p>We know from our past work as well as data received that there is a steady flow of 18-25 year olds with a conviction being released from southwest prisons into Cornwall and these young people need our support.</p> <p>Please note, data on prisoners from/due to be released to Cornwall is not readily available, we have to request this from each southwest prison. Data received is given under the condition that it is not fully accurate. Bearing this in mind we received the following information to support this application:</p> <p>Data received from HMP Exeter for the year Oct 21-22 shows that 10% of Cornish prisoners held were aged 18-25 (c. 40 individuals), slightly higher than the 8% of 18-25 year olds in the general Cornish population. Data from 2 other southwest prisons shows an additional 12 individuals currently in custody. We have not yet received data from HMP Portland Young Offenders Institute, but numbers here will be highest, and could easily be another 50 individuals age 18-25 released to Cornwall each year.</p> <p>We are also know there are many more of this age group with a conviction already living in the community in Cornwall, accurate data is not available.</p>		

We have identified the following issues / needs directly with the young people we have supported, as well as through the general experience of our staff. A young person tells us their needs during an initial assessment, and then throughout the mentoring provision.

Key problems which most ex-offenders in Cornwall face;

- Cornwall does not have a prison, so all prisoners are located out of county making visits difficult, with many journeys taking at least 1.5 to 2.5 hours. It is widely acknowledged that challenges prisoners face in prison, such as family breakdown, substance misuse and mental health issues are exacerbated when they are far from the support of friends and family, including post-release.
- the poor provision of effective rehabilitation services on release from prison. Data from a Freedom of Information request by Konnect showed that in 2015, 90% of all prisoners released to Cornwall have more than one conviction, showing there is a disjuncture between offender 'needs' and the provision of support available
- difficulty securing accommodation due to a significant housing crisis in Cornwall. There are now c. 20,000 households waiting for accommodation on the social housing register.
- the insecure nature of seasonal employment due to the tourism industry, general discrimination due to holding a conviction, low average wages which are 25% less than national average
- the rurality of Cornwall (and lack of sufficient public transport) making access to work very difficult without car ownership which is expensive
- the socio-economic deprivation experienced by people in Cornwall (half of all neighbourhoods in Cornwall are within the 10-40% most deprived in England).

Issues particularly relating to the young adults we have supported, including care-leavers:

- family breakdown and a lack of positive role models, leading to a lack of belonging and sense of safety
- being let down by the care system and feeling abandoned, rejected, unstable. Children in care in Cornwall are twice as likely to commit a crime as those not in care.
- negative influence from some peer groups, especially around drug use and exploitation, and the significant challenge of breaking away from these groups
- adverse childhood experiences leading to trauma, creating emotional and psychological issues which present as anger, aggression, impulsiveness, lack of concentration.
- a lack of qualifications and work experience
- a lack of knowledge of how to get employment such as struggling with application forms, writing a CV or preparing for an interview.
- unemployment over family generations caused by the decline in farming, fishing and mining industries once so important to Cornwall

What are the key outcomes that you will be seeking to achieve for young offenders?

We will support 20 young people, aged 18-25 to complete the mentoring provision, for a maximum of 12 months each during the 2 years that funding is in place.

We will work to get a young person into employment within 9 months, then support them for a further 3 months whilst in work.

The following outcomes are based on our previous experience of supporting people with criminal convictions:

- Development of increased maturity, self-sufficiency and independence and an increased ability to focus on future plans and goals - 100%
- Increased self-esteem, confidence, aspirations and empowerment - 100%
- Improved employability skills, eg. communication, teamwork, time-keeping, work ethic etc. - 100%
- Desistance from offending during their mentoring and when in work - 80%
- Gain relevant education, training or work experience during the project - 70% (this will depend on the needs of the young people)
- Progress into employment (80%) and are still in employment at the close of the 12 month support period (60%).

We have been realistic about the number of young people we think may still be employment at the end of the 12 month support period as for many this could be their first job and it may not necessarily turn out to be suitable, or other challenges such as public transport changes may have an impact. We will continue to support the young person if they leave the employment for the remaining period available, and will support them to gain further employment.

What are the key activities you will undertake with this funding?

Bespoke, face-to-face, 1-2-1 mentoring from a paid mentor will be delivered which will help address any needs the young person is facing as identified above. Mentoring will focus on building trust and rapport to support the young people to face the varied challenges ahead of them. Our goal is to support them to a place where they are ready to look for work, empower them to gain employment, and be there for them whilst in employment. We will also advocate for the young person with various organisations and employers. Mentoring sessions will be held at a location suitable for the individuals, and where practical we will make the most of our beautiful natural environment in Cornwall, such as our beaches, to provide a place for peaceful discussion and thoughtful reflection.

The mentoring sessions will provide the space to;

- Improve confidence and empowerment
- Discuss expectations
- Explore needs and barriers via the initial assessment including education, work experience, offending history, housing, social connections, health (including substance use) and finances.
- Set a realistic action plan, regularly reviewed.
- Celebrate successes
- Discuss and reflect on challenges
- Develop emotional management and interpersonal skills
- Deliver Konnect's employability programme which includes:
 - getting ready for employment (gaining qualifications, preparing a CV/Magna Vitae, gaining voluntary or work experience),

- preparation on how to disclose convictions (addressing spent and unspent convictions, positive disclosure, when, how and what to disclose, and creation of a self-disclosure letter)
- job searching (creating online profiles, completing application forms, preparing for interviews)
- in work support (regular contact with the young person and employer to ensure the young person is well-supported).

Who will be responsible for overseeing and delivering this work?

Young Adult Mentor - grant will fully fund this role

To manage a personal caseload of participants in liaison with the Team Leader. Delivery of high quality and effective mentoring support dependent upon participants' needs using a variety of modalities designed to remove barriers to the participants' emotional wellbeing, educational, training, employment, housing or financial needs. Regularly review participants' 'journey of progress' assessing needs, making appropriate referrals to specialist agencies/services.

Criminal Justice Team Leader - grant will fund 5 hours/ week of this role

To provide management and supervisory support to the Young Adult Mentor and to be the go-to person for everything involving the project's organisation and timeline. This includes coordinating internal resources and working with stakeholders to deliver outcomes that are within scope and budget.

How will your organisation continue to sustain this project after the grant ends?

We will seek further funding to continue the project itself. Konnect are planning to move from a CIC to a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) during 2023 which will open up many more funding opportunities. We will look at traditional grant funding to continue this project as well as the potential of securing contracts from other organisations (such as local council, DWP, JobCentre Plus etc) to continue the work. Our Konnect for Business project will become a CIC during 2023 and the profits will begin to fund our core activities, giving us another potential source of funding for the project.

We will also embed the lessons learned from this project into the working practices of all Konnect mentors who may support young people.

What expertise and track record do you have to be able to deliver this work successfully?

Konnect was co-founded by our CEO and another retired police officer in 2014. They worked with adult ex-offenders to give them the best opportunity of resettlement in order to divert from a life of further crime, therefore facilitating real and enduring change. Due to our success with ex-offenders, our reputation grew quickly resulting in work commissioned to support victims of crime, the long term unemployed and those experiencing housing exclusion, giving us a breadth of experience.

Konnect now delivers contracts/projects funded by Cornwall Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), substance misuse organisations, the Department for Work and Pensions and EU funds.

Our criminal justice staff are highly skilled from backgrounds in housing, policing, probation, health, education and social care and are experienced with supporting ex-offenders.

Our Board includes a Director who has held roles including Assistant Chief Probation Officer, HM Inspector of Probation and Offender Services Advisor.

Over the last 12 months we have provided support to almost 400 individuals, 80% have been supported with education, training, or employment goals. 200 were adults with convictions, at least 40 were aged 18-25 with at least 20 of these having had a conviction. Actual figures are likely to be higher but our database is in progress. Through this project we will expand our work with young adults offering a broad-support approach.

We will strengthen our links with the Leaving Care Team ? Cornwall Council, and CareFree, a local community organisation that works with children and young people in care and leaving care. This will enable us to not only engage with looked after young people but provide the specialist support they require.

Please see our case study of 'Vinnie', supported by Konnect, 10 min video:
<https://pluss.org.uk/pluss/video-breaking-the-pattern-of-offending/>

Explain how the grant will be spent

This grant will pay for the employment of a part-time (22.5 hours / week) mentor who will be dedicated to this project. Project management time from the Criminal Justice Team Leader and overheads are included. Direct project costs include a participant support fund to help with travel costs, DBS checks, birth certificates, refreshments at sessions etc. as well as staff travel, IT equipment, We have accounted for inflation in year 2.

Anticipated expenditure across the 2 years:

STAFF SALARIES

Young Adult Mentor Salary - £41,663

Team Leader Salary (project management time) - £12,247

Overheads @ 20% - £10,782

OTHER EXPENDITURE

Client refreshments - £1,490

Participant fund - £2,070

Staff subsistence - £1,490

Staff Travel - £3,726 Staff training - £414

Printing / postage / stationery - £248

IT / Telephone Costs - £1,525

Marketing - £3,105

Total - £78,761

We are confident that we can secure additional funding for the remaining project costs of £18,761 through other funders including Cornwall Community Foundation, National Lottery Awards for All, Local Councillors Community Chest fund etc.

Will you be receiving funding from any other sources for this project?

Yes

Do all staff have enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks? If no please state why.

Yes

Reason why not all staff have DBS checks.

Total funding requested in this application (£10,000 to £60,000 with a maximum of £30,000 in one year)	
£60,000	
Proposed grant start date	Proposed grant duration in months
01/04/2023	21
How much funding is required each year?	
Year 1	Year 2
£30,000	£30,000
What was your organisation's expenditure in the most recent financial year?	What was your organisation's annual income in the most recent financial year?
£1,134,027	£1,087,526
What value of unrestricted reserves did your organisation have at the end of the most recent financial year?	
£17,000	