

Live Well Spaces of Hope and Connection

Expression of Interest: Lead Equity Delivery Partner

Thanks to National Lottery players, 10GM, on behalf of Greater Manchester Live Well, will receive £16.5 million over four years from The National Lottery Community Fund, the UK's largest community funder.

This investment in Live Well Spaces of Hope and Connection will create a network of inclusive, community-led and owned spaces across Greater Manchester where people can meet, belong and find everyday support.

Prioritising communities facing the greatest inequalities, the investment will strengthen social infrastructure and grow community action, power and wealth. Powered by the Live Well movement, VCSE organisations, public services and residents will come together to share power, change systems and shape healthier, fairer, more connected places.

What is a Space?

A "space" is more than a physical place. It can be a building, garden or community venue, but it can also be a network, gathering, or online environment where people feel connected, supported and able to belong. Spaces of hope and connection are created through relationships, shared purpose and community leadership - not just the room they happen in. They are at the heart of everyday community life: informal and welcoming places where people come to connect, belong and get involved.

GM=EqAI - the Greater Manchester Equality Alliance - is the named pan-Greater Manchester Equity Partner, providing strategic leadership and expertise to help ensure the programme reaches and benefits communities experiencing the greatest inequalities. Working across Greater Manchester, GM=EqAI helps embed equity into programme design, commissioning, governance and learning, amplifies the voices of lived experience, and leads the programme's pan-Greater Manchester equity delivery strand, supporting communities of identity and experience whose needs and experiences may not be fully reflected through place-based investment alone.

We are inviting Expressions of Interest from organisations to become one of our three named Lead Delivery Partners for this strand of the programme. **This is one shared form for all three workstreams** - please register for the single community your organisation is most closely aligned with (see the tick box in the application form).

What we are looking for

We are looking for an organisation that is led by, trusted by, and reflective of one of three communities of identity and experience:

- **Racialised Communities**
- **LGBTQ+ Communities**
- **Disabled People**

We know organisations often work across more than one of these identities, and we expect intersectionality to shape how you approach this work, whichever community you register for. At this stage, please tell us the single community your organisation is most closely aligned with, so we can assess your application against the right workstream.

We are seeking organisations that can demonstrate a meaningful track record of embedding lived experience in decision-making processes, rather than relying solely on organisational scale or capacity. Applicants should be able to evidence a genuine commitment to sharing power and resources with smaller and grassroots-led organisations, working alongside them as valued partners.

We are also looking for organisations with established relationships, credibility, and reach within the communities they serve, alongside a strong track record of co-design. This programme requires partners who can bring proven expertise and leadership in co-design from the outset, rather than organisations looking to develop these approaches for the first time.

What this role involves

- Leading a co-design process with your community from **November 2026**, to identify the specific intersectional focus and test-and-learn activities within your workstream.
- Bringing a genuinely intersectional, cross-borough approach. We expect evidenced experience working across more than one Greater Manchester borough; we do not expect coverage of all ten.
- Being ready to move into delivery between **January and March 2027**, following the co-design period and activity approval.
- Delivering test-and-learn activity - testing new approaches across the framework of Live Well Spaces of Hope and Connection.
- Paying communities and contributors for their time throughout, as standard practice, not as an exception.
- Engaging with the programme's emerging learning framework, facilitated by the Innovation Unit, and with the wider programme team and delivery partners to enable cross-programme learning and influence.

What we are offering

- Approximately **£30,000 to £35,000 per year** in direct delivery funding for your workstream, within a test-and-learn commissioning relationship.
- A three-year agreement, reviewed annually, with continuation into Year 2 and Year 3 subject to that review.
- A collaborative relationship with both GM=EqAI as equity partner and 10GM Ltd.

The process

This Expression of Interest is open for **two weeks, from 5 to 16 October 2026**. Applications are assessed by a decision panel including GM=EqAI and 10GM. We expect to confirm the successful Lead Delivery Partner for each workstream by **24 October 2026**. Feedback to unsuccessful applicants will be provided by GM=EqAI in due course.

At this stage, we are only asking you to evidence the essentials - your legal constitution, safeguarding policy, basic financial controls, insurance and equal opportunities compliance. If you are the successful applicant, a fuller and proportionate due diligence process follows between 26 and 30 October, using a separate form we will share with you at that point. We are not asking every applicant to complete this fuller process - only the organisation we choose to work with.

We want to keep this stage simple. The purpose of the Expression of Interest is to help us understand whether your organisation is eligible and a strong fit for the workstream you are applying for.

We recognise that some of the most important aspects of this work are often better discussed than written down. For that reason, we will explore your approach to partnership working, power sharing, and intersectionality through a short conversation with shortlisted applicants, rather than asking for detailed written responses at this stage.

How to apply

You can respond in writing, in a conversation with us, or by short video - whichever route works best for your organisation. Answer in whatever format is easiest: plain text, bullet points, or a voice note you would like us to transcribe. Easy read and BSL are available on request, and if English is not your first language, let us know and we will arrange translation support. We are running one drop-in support session in the first week of this window for anyone who wants to talk through the application before submitting - details below.

Questions, and applications, to: Ayisatu Emore at gmeqal@vsnw.org.uk or on **07503081098**

and Sarah Lambrechts at sarah.lambrechts@actiontogether.org.uk

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

GM=EqAI and the Live Well Spaces of Hope and Connection team

Application form

This is a short form by design. One or two paragraphs under each heading is enough - we are looking for a clear, honest answer, not a long one.

Under each question below, a short note in grey tells you roughly how much to write and what to include. It is a steer, not a test - you will not be scored down for writing less, or for writing in a plain or informal way. If you would find it easier to answer by phone or voice note instead, see "How to apply" above.

Which community are you applying to work with?

Please tick one. If your work spans more than one, tick the community your organisation is most closely aligned with - your answers below can still speak to intersectionality.

- ☐ Racialised Communities
- ☐ LGBTQ+ Communities
- ☐ Disabled People

Part A: Essentials

These five items must be evidenced for your application to proceed to assessment. A short supporting document or confirmation is sufficient at this stage - the fuller due diligence evidence is only asked of whoever is shortlisted.

For each row, a short line of confirmation, or the name and date of the relevant policy, is enough. You do not need to attach or paste full documents at this stage.

Item	Your response / evidence
Legal constitution (please confirm your legal form and attach or reference your governing document)	
Safeguarding policy in place	

Item	Your response / evidence
Basic financial controls in place (for example, dual sign-off on payments, an annual budget, independently examined or audited accounts)	
Employer and public liability insurance in place	
Equal opportunities policy or statement in place	

Part B: About your organisation

These are factual answers - a few words or a short sentence for each is enough. No need to write in full paragraphs here.

Name	
Legal form	
How long you have been established.	
Which Greater Manchester boroughs do you currently work or have relationships in? A list is enough - no need to describe each one.	
Roughly how many staff, volunteers and board members do you have?	

Part C: Community legitimacy

Around 100 to 150 words - roughly one short paragraph. One specific example (a decision, a service, or a relationship that changed because of community input) tells us more than a general statement of values.

In a few sentences: how is your organisation led by, trusted by, and reflective of the community you are applying to work with? We will ask you to go deeper on this, with examples, if you are shortlisted.

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Part D: Paid participation

A sentence or two is enough.

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Do you currently pay communities and contributors for their time? Yes / No, and a sentence on how.

Part E: Networks and co-design practice

Around 100 to 150 words. Name real networks and relationships in plain terms - we are not looking for polished writing, just a clear and honest answer.

Briefly: what networks or relationships do you already hold within the community you are applying to work with, and what does genuine co-design look like in your practice, in your own words? We are looking for organisations that already hold this knowledge and can lead with it - this programme is not a space for an organisation to learn co-design from scratch.

What we will ask about at the shortlisting call, not here

Partnership practice and power-sharing; how you work across intersecting inequalities; more detail on the networks and co-design approach outlined in Part E; and where your cross-borough reach is strong and where it is limited.

We are asking these in conversation rather than in writing, because a five-minute conversation tells us more about genuine practice than a paragraph does, and it is a fairer way to assess organisations without a dedicated bid-writer. All applicants who pass Parts A to E are offered this call before a final decision - it is a normal part of the process, not a sign anything is wrong with your application.

Availability for a call

Are you available for a short call between **21 to 23 October 2026**? Please tell us below, with the days or times that work best - we have not fixed this date internally yet, so flag now if that week is difficult.

Available: Yes / No · Best days or times:

Declaration

I confirm that the information in this application is accurate, and that [organisation name] understands that, if selected as the successful applicant, a fuller due diligence process will follow between 26 and 30 October 2026 as a condition of contracting.

Name	Role	Date