

# Procurement Readiness 2021



## Guidance Notes

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## Introduction

The Procurement Readiness Programme is run by the School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) in partnership with Brewin Dolphin.

This programme will develop leaders with the emotional intelligence and capabilities to develop social enterprises that are procurement ready. This programme aims to give social entrepreneurs the best possible chance of success, through access to support and funding.

## The Procurement Readiness Programme

Are you an established and ambitious social enterprise looking to scale and secure bigger contracts?

We are launching a brand new programme fully funded by [Brewin Dolphin](#), and in partnership with [Supply Change](#), to demystify procurement processes and help social enterprises to understand how to bid for - and win - public and private sector contracts.

- **Strengthen your organisation by becoming procurement ready** with our free learning programme: eight days of learning (a blend of online and in-person sessions) between December 2021 and July 2022.
- **Receive a £2,000 grant**
- **Gain a network of peers**, who will help you develop your plans and act as a sounding board.
- **Grow your network of buyers and connect with potential future contractors**
- **Learn from those who have done it before through expert speaker sessions and 1:1 mentoring**

By the end of this programme, you will have the knowledge to pitch to businesses, bid for contracts and feel comfortable and confident with procurement processes.

## What are these guidance notes?

This document explains more about the programme and grant, and how to apply.

## Accessibility

If this document is formatted in a way that is not accessible to you, please email [applications@sse.org.uk](mailto:applications@sse.org.uk) or call us on 0207 089 9120 so we can share an accessible version.

## Remember to apply in time!

The deadline for applications is 5pm on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October. Please do not apply after that point.

[Apply online here](#)

We recommend starting your application as early as possible, so we can help you with any questions you have.

## Eligibility

### Can I apply?

We want to back individuals who are committed to making a social or environmental impact, in a disadvantaged area or with people in need. You must already be an established social entrepreneur with a track-record of work. You may be performing successfully within a business to customer model, and looking for opportunities to expand to a business to business model. Or you may already be using a business to business model but finding challenges and obstacles with securing contracts.

For examples of previous entrepreneurial approaches we have supported, see the case studies on our website: <https://www.the-sse.org/our-stories/>

If you can answer YES to all the following questions, then you can apply for the Procurement Readiness programme.

### About you

- Are you an ambitious individual who is leading a social enterprise and looking to expand and secure bigger contracts?
- Are you over 18 years old?
- Do you live in the UK?
- Do you have the right to work in the UK?
- Are you committed to meeting and sharing with others who have been through and are going through the same process?
- Are you committed to attending the blended learning programme on at least eight days between December 2021 and July 2022?

### Please do not apply if...

- You only want a grant and do not intend to attend the learning programme.
- You plan to develop a purely commercial business.
- Your project will be undertaking party political activities or will aim to induce people to convert to a religion (proselytising).
- You only plan to run a one-off event or activity.
- You are barred from running a company or charity.
- You have an unspent conviction for fraud.
- You are currently declared bankrupt or have a Debt Relief Order.
- Other people from your project are also applying or you think you may send someone else in your place during the programme. Only one applicant from each project or organisation can attend the learning programme.

# Programme at a Glance

## Witness Sessions

Entrepreneurs share their experiences and discuss the secrets of their success. You will be able to listen, learn and question them to help you examine and find meaning for your own project.

## Expert Sessions

Through questioning, observing and listening to experts, you will improve your understanding of procurement processes and develop as a leader.

## Grant

A grant of £2,000 will help you to develop your organisation and become procurement ready.

## One to One Mentoring

You may be matched with an experienced business or skills-based mentor, who will offer guidance and advice over the course of the programme.

## Peer Sessions

You will bring your skills and experience to the group and learn from the skills and experiences of other members. This network of like-minded social entrepreneurs will provide vital support as you develop over the programme.



## What will I learn on the programme?

This programme will develop leaders with the emotional intelligence and capabilities to develop social enterprises that are procurement ready. You will build your leadership skills, understand how to develop and adapt your product/service and grow as a self-directed learner. Our learning programmes are very different to traditional teaching. We're not about essays and academia. We believe in learning from other people's stories. You'll hear from inspiring social entrepreneurs who speak frankly about the good, the bad and the ugly of running an organisation.

You'll learn about:

- Procurement processes and contexts.
- Relationship and network building.
- Opportunity Mapping.
- Developing and adapting your product/service.
- Prototyping.
- Pitching and tender development.
- Fulfilling a contract.
- Delivering on a contract and working towards contract renewal.

You'll be in a group of around 10 people who are at a similar stage to you, coming from all across the country.

[This playlist of videos](#) shows the type of story you might hear.

The course is a transformational experience that will push, challenge and support you. It will give you the confidence and skills to achieve the impact you are aiming for. In addition to the structured learning blocks, you will also join peer led sessions that will provide you with a valuable forum for reflection, personal development, and developing your own solutions to challenges.

## What is the time commitment?

In total:

- Eight learning days (a mix of online and in-person), spread over eight to nine months
- Attending four peer led sessions across the eight months.
- Four 1:1 sessions with your mentor across the eight months.

We don't normally deliver learning during school holidays.

There is also a graduation event at the end of the programme which you will be invited to attend, to celebrate your achievements and your completion of the programme.

The learning programme is only one part of the picture. You will need to be developing your project during the year and will need to have the time and commitment to do this.

## Where will the course be held?

The programme will be a blend of online and in-person learning (provided the latter is safe to deliver). The in-person sessions will take place at a convenient location for participants, depending on who is on the programme. The most likely location for these is London.

You must be able to travel to attend the in person learning days. You can reimburse up to £250 for travel and accommodation per learning block.

## The grant

You receive a grant of £2000, paid in two instalments.

You can use the grant to help you attend the programme and to help with the costs of developing your social enterprise and making it procurement ready. The grant can be spent on running costs, marketing and other things to support the development of your enterprise and implement your learning.

**You will be required to attend the learning programme to receive the grant.** You will need to be able to spend your grant between December 2021 and July 2022.

It is helpful if you can tell us how you might spend your grant, but you can change this later in agreement with us. If you don't know yet, just say you don't know. It won't affect your application.

What you can use the grant for	What we cannot fund
The costs of attending the learning programme, including subsistence	Your salary (including payment to yourself as a sessional worker), living costs or childcare
Project running costs - e.g. office rent, telephone calls, stationery for use directly on your project	Renting office space in your own house
Events and activities	Academic studies, or those that are not relevant to the development of your project
Marketing and publicity - e.g. developing a website	Costs incurred before the grant is awarded
Salaries for sessional staff	Refurbishment of buildings
Other travel expenses	Any illegal activities
Volunteer expenses	Expenditure outside of the UK without prior agreement.



Insurance	Expenditure outside of the UK without prior agreement.
Criminal records checks	
Supplementary training for yourself or others directly relevant to the development of your project	
Other items that you can show are relevant to developing your project	

## Can I buy assets with the grant?

If you want to use the grant to contribute to a piece of equipment or an asset that is worth more than £1,000, such as purchasing a vehicle or building, you will need to talk to your grant manager first.

## How will my grant be paid?

You must have a UK bank account in your name only when you receive your grant. We cannot pay into joint accounts; though we may be able to pay to an organisation on your behalf (see below).

- Your grant will usually be paid in two instalments at the start and end of the programme year.
- You will need to agree and sign terms and conditions and provide us with all the necessary documents before we release the first payment. You will also need to provide us with some monitoring and financial information so we can release the remaining payments.
- In order to receive the full grant, you will need to attend at least 80% of the learning programme.

We will work with you if you face genuine difficulties in claiming or spending your grant.

## Can I nominate an organisation to receive my grant on my behalf?

For various reasons, some people want the grant paid directly to their organisation, or to a host organisation on their behalf.

If you are accepted on the programme, we will ask you if you want to make this arrangement. We will need to do some checks to make sure that the organisation is willing and able to accept the grant on your behalf and agree terms and conditions with that organisation.



## How do I apply?

Apply online by 5pm on Sunday October 17th 2021

**Top tip:** We recommend applying early, so we can help you if you have questions or problems. (We will be very busy in the week before the deadline.)

- [Complete your online application here](#)
- You can save your application and return to it at a later date. Just click “Save for later”, and you will be given a unique link to return to your application. Remember to save this link. (We will also email you the link. Check your junk folder if you can't find the email.)
- When you've completed all the questions, click “Preview” to review your application, then click “Apply”. You'll receive a copy of your submission by email and will then be redirected to our equalities monitoring form.

If you have any problems, contact us on [applications@sse.org.uk](mailto:applications@sse.org.uk) or 0207 089 9120.

**Top tip:** If you want to include a governing document, your accounts or any additional documents in your application (these are all optional), save them in the format “FirstnameSurnameAccounts.doc” so they are ready to attach.

**Don't miss the deadline!** Please don't submit your application after 5pm on Sunday October 17<sup>th</sup> 2021 as it will not be considered. Under exceptional circumstances, we may grant approval to submit your application late. You will need to get in touch with programme manager Freya Smith to discuss this, ahead of the deadline - [freya.smith@sse.org.uk](mailto:freya.smith@sse.org.uk)

“I came to the School for Social Entrepreneurs pretty much as a blank canvas and now feel like an emerging picture equipped with the tools to succeed and progress. It's really empowering.”

- SSE student

## How will my application be assessed?

### 1. October: Info session

There will be an information session before the application deadline, in which you can find out more about the programme.

### 2. October: We assess your online application

Once we have received your application, we will check that you meet the basic eligibility criteria and that your application is complete. (Please note that incomplete applications will be rejected.) Your application will then be assessed by the SSE team.

### 3. October: Group assessment session and interview

We will invite shortlisted candidates to a group assessment session and an interview. We may ask you to provide your proof of identity and right to work.

### 4. November: Offer to join the programme

If successful, you will be offered a grant offer and learning programme package, with 30 days to sign and accept the terms and conditions. You will be asked to provide necessary documentation, including criminal record checks where appropriate.

### 5. December: The programme begins!

The learning programme starts in December 2021 and runs until July 2022.



## FAQs

### What do we mean by procurement?

Procurement is the act of obtaining goods or services, typically for business purposes. Procurement is most commonly associated with businesses because companies need to solicit services or purchase goods, usually on a relatively large scale.

Private and public sector organisations are increasingly considering the social impact and value of the goods and services they procure, due to a change in the government's Social Value Model (2021), meaning they must now explicitly evaluate social value in their contracts.

This provides a real opportunity for social enterprises to increase their income, influence and impact by seeking a bigger slice of central government's [£292bn annual spend](#) on goods and services. It could mean more influence and income opportunities with government, as well as creating and maintaining jobs for those furthest from the labour market. [Read more in our blogpost.](#)

### What if I have particular needs which may prevent me from fully taking part in the learning programme?

If you have any particular needs or there are any barriers that may prevent you from taking part in the programme, do talk to us about this. We are keen to enable people with disabilities and other access issues to come to our programmes.

There is a separate small fund held by the SSE to enable students who have particular needs to access the programme. This will be negotiated individually with participants. If you do have specific needs and are concerned about this, please contact us to discuss.

### What happens if my enterprise works with children, young people or vulnerable adults?

Vulnerable adults means anyone in vulnerable situations including people who are receiving counselling, social work support, health or personal care, assistance with finances or shopping because of age, illness or disability, or transport to day centres, etc.

If your project will be undertaking unsupervised work with children under 18 years old, or working with vulnerable adults, you may need Enhanced DBS checks for staff and volunteers working with these people.

The SSE can provide you with advice on this.

### What about other requirements?

- You must ensure that health and safety standards are met to protect yourselves and others involved in your activities.
- You must have any insurance (e.g. public liability Insurance, employer's liability insurance, equipment insurance etc.) that is required for your activities.

- You must also ensure that you have any approvals, permissions, licenses or carry out any criminal record checks required by law.
- If you are providing therapeutic counselling services, you must be able to demonstrate that you are properly trained and supervised, e.g. through membership of an appropriate body. If you haven't got this already, we may make it a condition of your grant.
- You will also be required to put Equal Opportunities procedures in place once your project has started. We can advise you about this.
- You will be able to put your grant towards these costs.

## **Can I apply if my project is hosted by a larger organisation?**

You don't need to have established a formal organisation, but if you have, it must have been set up for less than two years at the time of application. Your project may be hosted by a larger and older organisation. If so, it will have to have a degree of independence within that organisation. However, we do not normally accept franchises or organisations that are controlled by a local authority.

## **Can I apply for this programme if I have criminal convictions?**

Previous SSE fellows have included people who have criminal convictions, some of whom have used their experience in prisons to make a difference to the lives of ex-offenders. You do not need to let us know about previous convictions unless they are relevant to your application.

If you have unspent convictions for fraud or any convictions which may affect your ability to run your project, including working with children, young people or adults who are vulnerable, you should let us know, as we may undertake checks during the course of the application assessment.

## **Can I apply if unsuccessful in the past?**

If you or someone else from your organisation or project has applied before and not been successful, you are welcome to apply again. We often have people on our programme who are applying for the second or third time, and whose ideas or plans have developed since they first applied. However, we would suggest that you check the feedback you received in the past. If in doubt, you can contact us.

## **Can more than one person from our project apply?**

We will only assess applications from one person from your project or organisation. Please decide who you would like to attend the programme and they should be the one to apply. Because of the way the learning programme works and how the trust within the group attending the learning programme is built, it is important that it is the applicant who attends all the sessions. In general, we will not allow others from your project to attend the programme.

## **Can I apply if I am connected to the School for Social Entrepreneurs, or to any of the funders of this programme?**

We cannot accept applications from people who are staff or trustees of SSE. If you have a close connection with SSE, its host organisations, staff, trustees or the funders of this programme, please contact us before making an application.

## **Can I apply if I am supporting other businesses including social enterprises?**

We do not usually accept applicants whose main work is providing training or business support services primarily to other businesses, including social enterprises or charities. This would include training, fundraising or management support. However, we sometimes consider applications where the services provided are mainly back-office support services, such as HR, accountancy or office space, or where training is provided for people who are unemployed in order to help them access employment. If in doubt, please contact us.

## **Can I apply if my project is a franchise?**

We do not usually accept applications from projects that are franchises of another project. We expect that you would receive the support you need to set up from the parent organisation.

## **Can I apply if my project is controlled by a public sector organisation?**

We accept applications from projects which are public sector roll-outs, or set up with the support of local authorities, as long as they are now fully independent. However, we do not usually accept applications from projects or organisations that are controlled by a public-sector organisation. If in doubt, please contact us.

## **What about Data Protection?**

The School for Social Entrepreneurs is committed to protecting your personal information and acting in line with your rights under data protections laws and will treat all data in accordance with our Data Protection Policy here: <https://www.the-sse.org/your-data>

SSE will collect and use personal information provided by you in your online application or separately, or which we otherwise lawfully obtain about you. We may use this information for:

- processing your application and managing the selection process for the programme
- conducting due diligence on you and your organisation as part of that process

This includes contacting you about the workshop or programme which you are applying for by phone or email.

If your application is successful, we may also use your information for:

- managing your participation in the programme
- managing your grant claims and payments
- matching you with a contact at Brewin Dolphin



- monitoring your progress and the impact of the programme
- sharing and promoting your story and the story of your social enterprise online or externally
- other lawful reasons

We may share your information with our funders and partners including Brewin Dolphin for monitoring and reporting purposes. They will also only use your information for the reasons outlined above

Further details, including how we share your information and your rights relating to our use of your information, can be found under our Data Protection Notice, a copy of which is available here: <https://www.the-sse.org/your-data>.

We ask you to provide your Equal Opportunities details. You are not required to give these and you can select the 'Opt Out' box. However, it is helpful for our future development and marketing that you provide this information. It can also help us to identify ways in which we can provide specific support to those who need it, for example applicants who may require additional support to attend interviews or participate fully in the programme.

## Key contact details

If you need any advice on your application, please contact us on 0207 089 9120 or by email at [applications@sse.org.uk](mailto:applications@sse.org.uk).

For more information please go to:

- the main programme page: <https://www.the-sse.org/courses/procurement-readiness/>

## Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of the programme, please see our Complaints Procedure: <https://www.the-sse.org/complaints>

