

Part A - General Information

Organisation/Individual Name

Happy Smiles Training CIC

Organisation Type/Structure

Community Interest Company (CIC)

Theme/Nature of Project

Social Mobility

If 'Other' please specify

Disability, education, employment

Company/CIC Registration Number (if applicable)

12189053

Project Name (if same as Organisation Name, please leave this blank)

Realise Your Potential

Name of Lead Contact

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Social Media Handles (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram etc):

Twitter - @happysmilescic
Facebook- @happysmilestrainingcic
Instagram - @happysmilestrainingcic
TikTok - @happysmilestrainingcic
LinkedIn - @AlexWinstanley

Part B - Project Proposal

Project Mission: A snapshot of the project's intention (50 words max)

Happy Smiles Training CIC is a disabled persons-led training provider, made up of over 90% of disabled people.

Aims:

- Empower disabled people to create positive, sustainable social change.
- Create more inclusive, resilient communities.
- Provide positive role models for young disabled people.

Situation (250 words)

Our organisation was co-founded by a disabled person, to address the systematic undervaluing of disabled people and the stigma attached to disability. Our beneficiaries often have significantly low confidence and self-esteem and struggle with access, isolation and anxiety, due to engrained social attitudes.

We work with some of the hardest-to-reach individuals by engaging with our local authority and being a prominent voice in the area. We regularly speak to local stakeholders via steering groups, to help us understand the needs of our community. Through our steering groups and beneficiaries, we have been told that there is a need for an organisation that empowers disabled people to have their voices heard and valued.

The social and economic impact of our work on communities is wide-ranging, with:

- Disability hate crime continuing to increase nationally (9% increase in 2021).
- The disability employment gap between disabled and non-disabled people is currently 29%.

- Higher rates of poverty and mental health challenges for disabled people (the proportion of disabled people aged 16 years+ in England who reported feeling lonely “often or always” was over four times that of non-disabled people in 2021, whilst life costs you £583 more on average a month if you're disabled.)

All of these statistics are reflected within our local community, with many facing worse challenges than described due to the living costs crisis.

Complication (250 words)

The above findings are not improving. The underlying problem, as we are told by disabled people in our organisation and community, is that they don't feel cared about by wider society. Despite being the largest minority group and making up one-fifth of the country, we know that disabled people are often an afterthought, exemplified by last year's COP26 conference when an Israeli Minister couldn't even access the building due to its inaccessibility. Like this example, our stakeholders want to influence change but aren't being given the opportunity to do so. That's why we set up our social enterprise, to create positive action led by disabled people.

The rising cost of living is now making it more difficult for disabled people to be valued members of our community, with many having no choice but to only access traditional day services. We are also seeing this leading to a lack of personal assistance support for disabled people on a regional level and therefore a rise in isolation. Not only does this affect the independence of the individual but also the wellbeing of their immediate family who inevitably have to provide support themselves. We believe that this hasn't been solved yet as people are often quick to revert to traditional support provision for disabled people as it is an easier form of income.

This leaves us with the opportunity to build on our innovative model that supports disabled people to increase their independence, employment opportunities and wellbeing, whilst leading positive social change.

Solution (250 words)

Our lived experience approach has had proven, positive impact on the social inclusion of communities and the way those communities view and value disabled people. Having delivered training to over 7000 people across the North West, with 100% of people recommending our work, we know that our disabled persons-led work is starting to address the above complications. We have upskilled 14 local disabled young adults, with 100% of those people volunteering with our organisation and we have taken on 2 disabled people into employment with us. We want to build on this by taking the innovative approach of supporting our team of disabled people to lead a peer-led programme of support for other local disabled people. We believe that this will lead to practical, sustainable social change, led by people with lived experience and expertise.

Over 12 months, our team of disabled volunteers and staff will offer a bespoke package of peer support for local disabled people who we will identify with support from our Local Authority and through our current relationships with local stakeholders and communities. Throughout the 12 months, the beneficiaries will have access to mentoring, weekly upskilling and wellbeing activities and work experience opportunities. Through monthly goal setting and reviews, the aim will be for each beneficiary to be employment-ready by the end of the 12-month programme. They will then be able to build on the current impact of our work across communities, with an individualised employment pathway in place.

Part C - Wider Support

How would the Stephen Lloyd Award network of partners' support be beneficial to your project? (250 words max)

As a micro-organisation that has sustained and grown through traded income, we believe that the support from the Stephen Lloyd network of partner's would be invaluable to our continued growth. As the Managing Director, having been on the School for Social Entrepreneurs Start Up and Trade Up programmes, as well as being a Paul Hamlyn Foundation Ideas & Pioneers Alumni, I wholeheartedly recognise the value of support such as mentoring, business planning and advice. This support would provide our work with the strategic development and improved foundations for long-term growth and success.

Part D - Financial Justification

In general terms, please explain how the winning funds would be used to carry out your project. (50 words max)

The majority of funding will be used to employ a Project Manager. This will offer a dedicated focus for myself to step away from current project management responsibilities and focus on the strategic development and spread of our work in other localities/markets, particularly within the business sector and social care.

Part E - Supporting Information

Governing Documents: Where relevant, please upload any recent charity accounts and governing documents as attachments.

- [HappySmilesTraining-GoverningDoc.pdf](#)

Team: We would like to learn a little more about the individual or team invested into the project. What are your individual credentials? Is there a story behind how you or your team all came together to support the project? (75 words max)

After over a decade as a teacher and personal assistant to multiple local disabled young adults, I grew frustrated with seeing disabled friends being undervalued and stigmatised. Haydn, a local disabled friend, and I decided that we needed to create the change we wanted to see. Other team members quickly followed and, despite the impact of Covid-19, we have continued to grow a team of like-minded people who are passionate about social change.

YouTube Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4NbkDXIAvmY>

Additional References: You are welcome to provide a list of up to 5 links with any relevant supporting material or visuals, as further reference

<https://www.wigantoday.net/news/people/wigan-social-enterprise-group-happy-smiles-named-in-shaw-disability-trust-power-100-3802476>

<https://www.manchesterworld.uk/news/greater-manchester-community-groups-recognised-at-we-stand-together-awards-event-3717642>

https://www.itv.com/news/granada/2021-05-12/wigan-teacher-turns-author-to-help-children-deal-with-some-of-lifes-most-difficult-issues?fbclid=IwAR25iTVkeefEnFkR3hpX9bINWubkvaEEqF3i_J6QDEOreaAuou6tvRJ3Tos

<https://wiganwarriors.com/blog/2021/12/22/warriors-team-up-with-happy-smiles/>

<https://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/19281135.westhoughton-primary-school-pupils-treated-inspirational-training-sessions/>