



Reaching Potential

2026/2027 Sunderland Bursary Application Pack for Individuals and Organisations

Supporting the development and skill-sets of individuals
and VCSE organisations in Sunderland.



What is Reaching Potential?

Reaching Potential Sunderland provides bursaries to enable individuals and organisations in the local voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector to benefit from training or personal development opportunities that strengthen the person or the organisation.

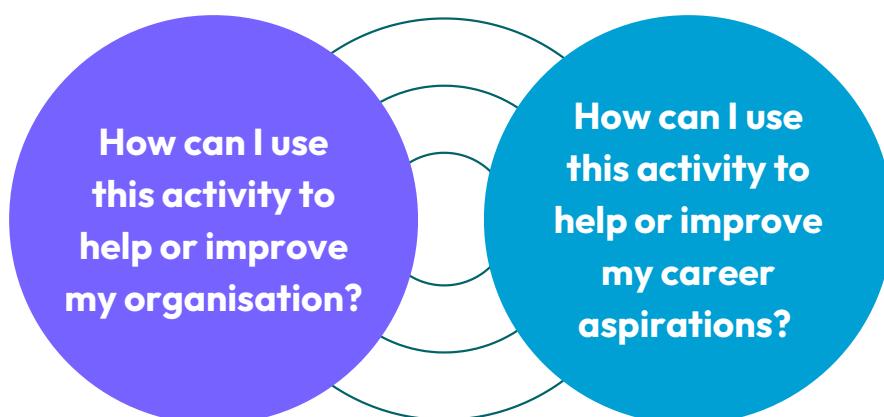
We recognise that austerity measures have impacted on VCSE organisations, leading to a reduction of staff training budgets and opportunities for staff development. Our response is to offer skills development bursaries and to widen the range of opportunities available in order to better meet current needs.

What Can I Apply For ?

We welcome applications to;

- **Enhance your capability in key skills to help you and your organisation.**
Examples: Project management, fundraising, finance, enterprise, governance, digital and social media, etc.
- **Help toward the cost of attending other types of training or events that enable you to enhance your VCSE sector career prospects and supporting your organisation too.**
Examples: Conferences, talks, programmes etc.

When Applying Think About...



What Can't I Apply For?

We are unable to award a bursary toward the cost of:

- **Driving lessons**
- **Activities taking place outside the UK** (we do allow for virtual training, if the provider is in a different time zone)
- **Contributions towards (advanced) degrees**, e.g. Master's Programmes
- **Capital costs** (Any equipment and other physical items, e.g. books or laptops)
- **Accommodation or Travel costs**, e.g. to visit another organisation
- Activities which have **already started/completed or been paid for**

Am I Eligible to Apply?

You can apply for a Reaching Potential bursary as long as:

- You can explain how your chosen training/activity/event will enhance your own personal development **and/or** your organisation.
- Your organisation is legally constituted as a **non-profit/VCSE organisation** and has been in existence for a **minimum of 2 years**.
- If applying as an individual, you must be an employee (**volunteer or paid**) at your VCSE organisation.
- Individuals **cannot apply on behalf** of other individuals.
- If you are applying as an individual you must provide **personal bank** details.
- If you are applying as an organisation you must provide your organisations bank details and **have permission** to do so.

Note: 'Organisation' applications must be for **one** course/training/provider for multiple members of staff

How Much Can I Apply For?

Individuals can apply for up to £1,000

Organisations can apply for up to £3,000

(Max two 'Individual' Bursaries and one 'Organisation' Bursary per organisation)

We want the Sunderland Reaching Potential bursary fund to support as many people and organisations as possible. If unsuccessful, you may be able to apply again, so keep in touch if you need support!

If We Approve Your Application

If you're awarded a Bursary, it is subject to 2 conditions:

- 1.** You provide a copy of the invoice/receipt/proof of purchase for the course/activity/event within 1 month of you being awarded.
- 2.** You will be invited to join RankNet and write a short piece on what you learn/developed during the training. This only needs to be a few paragraphs but it's great to share your experiences and help inform others and prospective Bursary applicants.

Before you Apply...

We can't increase a bursary award so, for example:

- Be sure to **include VAT** into the application if the course/event costs include it.
- If you want to take part in an online course/event where the price is in a different currency, work out the exchange rate but also factor in a 'buffer' amount or apply using a figure when the Pound (£) was weak. **We can factor awards down but not up, unfortunately.**
- Make sure you include any other '**hidden costs** (for example, is there a registration fee?)

Think about value for money!

- We need to make our money go as far as possible and expect you to do the same, so make sure you **shop around!**
- Do your **research** around the course and providers to find the right one for you and **tell us why** you've chosen that course/provider.

Get permission/support !

- You should **talk to your line manager/finance manager/CEO** before applying. If you cannot, please do get in touch with us.



How Do I Apply?

- **Fully explain what training/activity you want to do and why do you want to do it.**
- **Tell us the potential benefits of undertaking the training/activity for you and your organisations.**
- **Make sure you've talked to you have support from your line manager/organisation - especially if you need to take time out of work.**
- **We need all relevant details about the course including costs, provider, location, timescales etc. This will help us make a decision.**
- **If the course/activity/event cost exceeds the bursary threshold you will need to state how you will fund the rest.**
- **Only apply for one course per application either as an individual or as an organisation.**

To secure a Reaching Potential bursary we need you to complete a short form telling us about you/your organisation, what your chosen training, activity or event is, where it will happen, how much it will cost and how it will help your continuing professional development, your career aspirations and your organisation.

Use this link to complete your application.

When Will I Know ?

We will let you know if your application has been approved within 4 weeks of the application deadline. Successful applicants will receive their Reaching Potential bursary payment in approximately 3 weeks.

Good Luck with your application!

Kai Wooder
Director of Programmes



Our thriving network tackles inequality to improve life in the communities they cherish.

Contact Us

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