



Learning partner opportunity:

Culturally specific responses to multiple disadvantage

1. Background

BAC-IN is a peer-led, not for profit Community Interest Company which provides culturally specific responses to drug and alcohol dependency and other disadvantages. Based in Nottingham, BAC-IN offers an alternative to mainstream service provision which acknowledges diversity, recognizes and values difference and welcomes a wide range of cultural, faith-based and spiritual perspectives to rehabilitation and addiction recovery.

Lankelly Chase is a charitable foundation seeking to bring about change that will transform the quality of life of people who face severe and multiple disadvantage. We commission, co-design and grant fund a variety of practice, policy and research programmes which help us in this mission and help to tell us how change really happens for people living difficult lives at the margins of society.

Lankelly Chase and BAC-IN have been working together for around 9 months to establish a shared vision for a longer term partnership – *Project Ahryzen* – which it is now confirmed will cover the next two years. Using collective insight gathered by BAC-IN friends and peers, the ambition is to establish and learn from a ‘new paradigm’ for services for BAME people facing multiple disadvantage at individual, family and community level.

2. Aims

We wish to engage a learning partner to work alongside BAC-IN and Lankelly Chase to examine the primary learning aims of:

a) Exploring the lives of BAC-IN peers and hidden experiences of disadvantage

Our sense is that the experiences of BAC-IN peers are rarely voiced or amplified, and that there may be some fundamental differences with other life trajectories – whether due to culture, background, values, faith or other themes – which mean these experiences are poorly understood.

We would therefore like to learn in-depth about the lives and experiences of BAC-IN’s network of friends and peers. Provisional lines of enquiry include:

- Experiences of disadvantage, including the impact of cultural identity
- Experiences of seeking and accessing support services in both ‘specialist’ and ‘mainstream’ settings
- Pathways into ‘recovery’ and conceptions of a rewarding life.

b) Developing and learning about elements of a successful model for supporting BAME communities facing multiple disadvantage

The work could begin with an examination of BAC-IN's key activities and theory of change, and present an understanding of what impact they have, but this will only be a starting point. We want to look beyond the 'outcomes paradigm' and contract a partner to work alongside BAC-IN and Lankelly Chase to understand, develop and communicate their model, and to establish a feedback loop which can drive our collective learning. The aim is to grapple not just with the question of *whether* BAC-IN's approach 'works', but especially *why* and *how*, addressing both strengths and challenges.

Provisional lines of enquiry include:

- The impact and importance of BAC-IN's 'peer-led' approach
- The role(s) of culture, faith and spirituality in supporting BAC-IN's friends and peers
- The role of specialist services in the context of a generic/mainstream system.

3. Key responsibilities

The role of the learning partner is to act as a supporter, guide and 'critical friend', with a key responsibility of supervising an action research plan for the achievement of the learning outcomes which enables BAC-IN's staff, peers and friends to retain as much ownership of the process as possible.

The term 'learning partner' is used instead of 'evaluator' or 'researcher' deliberately. We are not asking for an evaluation which establishes some key impacts of BAC-IN's work at a set point in time, followed by a time-limited attempt to communicate this. We are looking for a dynamic rather than static approach: an ongoing action learning process of 'collecting and reflecting' with specific outputs yet to be negotiated between the project partners. This could be delivered by an independent consultant or partnership, research company, academic department or any similar organisation.

We anticipate that activities and outputs would include, but not be limited to:

- Establishing an idea of context: eg brief review of existing theory/practice on BAME issues and multiple disadvantage
- Development of a proposed framework/methodology for achieving the learning aims
- Identification and engagement with key audiences/stakeholders
- A plan for fieldwork and strategies/methods for the collection and analysis of data
- Designing and implementing a process of reflection
- A training, support and quality control framework which supports BAC-IN to undertake research activities and 'own their own knowledge'
- Work alongside BAC-IN and Lankelly Chase to implement the methodology/provide guidance and supervision
- Production and communication of learning. 'Traditional' reports are part of a useful picture, but we are also keen to explore other forms of collecting, analysing and reporting data, plus

learning events or similar. We are interested in an approach which can communicate information and data in creative ways to a variety of different audiences.

4. Qualities and experience/skills

The partnership is based on a strong sense of shared values and principles, so we are looking for a learning partner who shares a commitment to openness, honesty, empathy and reflection.

In responding to this opportunity, we would expect potential learning partners to outline:

- a) A basic methodology for how the learning outcomes could be achieved (e.g. activities for the first 12 months);
- b) Knowledge, skills and experience relating to the field of multiple disadvantage, including strong consideration of diversity issues and cultural competency;
- c) Demonstrable experience of, and commitment to, harnessing and amplifying the voice and power of people who have experienced (or are experiencing) severe and multiple disadvantage;
- d) Experience of capturing learning and sharing it in creative ways and formats;
- e) An understanding of questions relating to data protection and the management and maintenance of data;
- f) Experience of, and desire to engage in, relationship building and stakeholder engagement.

5. Responding to this opportunity

We are open to informal approaches and discussions about this opportunity, but will also require written information on the above to enable a shortlisting/decision process between BAC-IN and Lankelly Chase (see below). For informal enquiries, please contact BAC-IN's service director Sohan Sahota: sohan.bac_in@yahoo.co.uk / 07980 149076.

Interested parties should produce a proposal, in no more than 3 sides of A4, detailing how you would approach this request and **what you will do to meet the specification detailed above in section 4**. Full applications should be sent to oliver@lankellychase.org.uk by **5pm on June 12th 2017**.

In addition, applicants should supply a summary of the costs and resources for the work. It is suggested that at a minimum this sets out the different types of costs the project will incur, and when these are likely to occur.

The budget available for this work is expected to be **£20,000**.

Timescales

May 2017 – call for learning partner issued

June 12th – deadline for expressions of interest

June/July – shortlisting and interviews

July/August – learning partner appointed and work begins.

The majority of work will take place in and around Nottingham, but occasional travel to London (where Lankelly Chase is based) will also be required, plus potentially other locations as appropriate (eg knowledge sharing).

Appendix I: BAC-IN's history and context

BAC-IN began life in 2003 as a small service user-led self-help group, founded by its current service director. It has always aimed to provide for a set of BAME experiences and perspectives which are poorly catered for in 'mainstream' service offers. Like many organisations, BAC-IN has experienced periods of expansion and contraction over time, including significant grant funded projects and participation in statutory-funded consortia. Operations are currently small-scale, and over the course of the first two years of *Project Ahryzen* the **estimate** is that around 35 individuals and families per year will engage with the network, with three members of staff overseeing a mixture of individual, family and group-based recovery activity.

If you require further information on the BAC-IN's current setup, please feel free to get in touch.

www.bac-in.co.uk

Appendix II: Lankelly Chase and the 'system conditions'

Over time, Lankelly Chase has refined the best way of achieving our mission from 'funding what works' to 'spreading the *preconditions* of what works'. Across a wide range of current and previous projects working on various elements of multiple disadvantage, we have learned that the most successful change projects tend to have the same fundamental principles in common, and exhibit the same basic pillars in their approach. We describe these 'system conditions' as:

- People see themselves as part of an interconnected whole
- There is shared purpose and vision
- Feedback and collective learning drive adaptation
- People are viewed as resourceful and bringing strengths
- Leadership is collaborative and promoted at every level
- Power is shared and equality of voice is actively promoted
- Decision making is devolved
- Open, trusting relationships enable effective dialogue
- Accountability is mutual.

BAC-IN are a strongly values-led organisation whose belief in the central importance of honesty, openness and integrity fit strongly with Lankelly Chase's analysis. We try to model these conditions in our own activities, and are hoping for a learning partner who can help to exhibit and test this approach during the contracted partnership. www.lankellychase.org.uk