



Now OPEN for Applications – Medway’s new VCS Transformation Academy

As the secretariat for Medway’s VCS Coalition Transformation Academy and Alliance (see below for the background to this initiative), MVA seeks Founding Members to develop and lead the VCS Transformation Academy.

The VCS Transformation Academy is the much discussed opportunity for Medway’s VCS to radically transform how we operate. It is a pivotal moment for the sector; one in which this generation of leaders will be able to shape the future of the VCS both locally and, thanks to our academic partners in this initiative, nationally and potentially internationally.

The Vision for the VCS Transformation Academy is to empower the sector to secure and safeguard its services for future generations. It will offer valuable access to new skills and training, locally tested solutions and mentoring to support groups and organisations of all sizes to transform their service delivery and operational functions.

The Transformation Academy is based on the principles of Generous Leadership that Medway’s VCS has regularly demonstrated to great effect in recent years – and, thanks to National Lottery Community Funding, there is also dedicated budget to help the VCS Founding Members create some capacity for them to lead and participate in the programme.

As a Founding Member, you would be responsible for shaping and steering the development of the Academy. We are committed to securing a range of expertise and diversity across the Founding Members and welcome applications from people from all backgrounds and all sections of society who feel able to help guide the Transformation Academy towards achieving its Vision and goals.

We are now accepting applications to become a Founding Member. Please find below the Member Affirmation for this role and details of the application process:

VCS Transformation Academy Member Affirmation

The VCS Transformation Academy is ‘owned and led’ by Medway voluntary and community groups and organisations. Medway Voluntary Action will provide the secretariat and some programme support for the VCS Transformation Academy. Founding Members from Medway’s VCS will define and develop the scope and Vision for the Academy.

What you can expect from becoming a Founding Member:

- You will be at the forefront of VCS development and transformation in Medway and, potentially, nationally.
- You will have opportunity to build new strategic relationships and develop your network of local leader colleagues.
- You will be given access to free skills training and expertise.
- You can collectively explore strategic developments and ‘the bigger picture’ for the VCS and local people.
- You may be able to receive payments for participating in testing transformational ideas, activities and initiatives.
- You will be given opportunity to formally train as a peer-mentor, and to earn income as a Transformation Mentor to the VCS.

- To receive secretariat and programme support from Medway Voluntary Action; including dedicated Project Manager, Administration and Communication support

What the VCS Transformation Academy requires from Founding Members:

- An ability to demonstrate experience of putting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into practice.
- Leadership experience and the ability to influence in your own organisation/group – this can include individuals with managerial potential who are seeking to develop their skills.
- A clear commitment to the principles and value of Generous Leadership within Medway’s VCS.
- A commitment to doing things differently and exploring operational and service transformation.
- Representation that reflects the diversity of Medway’s diverse VCS – this requires organisations and groups from: all backgrounds, all sections of society, varied size and experience; all areas of work and client groups.
- An interest and commitment to engaging with local and national information sharing and promotional events and activities.
- An ability to commit time to attend Founding Member meetings and (if you opt to engage with these financially reimbursed activities) participate in ‘task and finish’ groups and/or offer mentoring support.
- A commitment to honesty, transparency and building relationships with other Founding Members and other VCS peers.

How do I get involved?

As the number of places is limited to 30 VCS representatives, the selection process for recruiting Founding Members will be based on the ability to demonstrate the above qualities and requirements.

To apply to become a Founding Member you will need to complete an Expression of Interest Form (that leads you through each of the above criteria) and you can request a copy of the form from MVA by emailing info@mva.org.uk.

Completed Expression of Interest Forms will need to be returned to MVA by 31st December 2021. All completed forms will be reviewed by a Selection Panel (with representatives from MVA and independent local stakeholders) in January 2022.

If you would like an informal discussion about this opportunity, please call to speak Jane Howard or Clare Saunders on 01634 812850.

Background to the VCS Coalition Transformation Academy and Alliance

For some time now, Medway’s VCS have been exploring collaboration, but this has been principally around projects and deliverables; working collaboratively to transform service delivery and achieve organisational efficiencies was an intangible aspiration that many simply did not have the time or money to explore.

When we were faced with the challenges presented by Covid-19, and staring into possible closure or cutting of the support we offer, it struck many of us that if we had only acted with earnest on our shared discussions of collaboration, then the VCS might have been better placed to weather the storm.

Medway Voluntary Action and Age UK (Medway) are delighted to announce that National Lottery (Community Fund) Funding has been awarded to help Medway’s VCS find the capacity and skills to develop and transform how we work.

Over the coming three years, the funding will support three key initiatives in Medway:

- The launch of a VCS Transformation Academy – owned and led by Medway’s VCS, the Academy will offer access to training, locally tested solutions and mentoring to support groups and organisations of all sizes to transform their service delivery and operational functions.
- The creation of a Medway Charities Alliance – developed by Medway’s VCS, the Alliance will give local groups and organisations access to lower cost services (to reduce their overheads) and more flexible income generation solutions.
- An academically based Knowledge Exchange Platform – supported by Nottingham Trent University, this will empower Medway’s VCS to share and access high-quality resources and learning to help improve their skills and capacity to engage with wider opportunities.

Our shared hope is that from out of the fire of a global pandemic that affected us all, no matter our size, experience, service or capacity, a phoenix of a transformed VCS can rise to ensure that a sustainable, self-sufficient sector is reborn.