

Building the movement for community power

Closing date for applications: 20th October 2022

Please email applications to: will@willbrett.info

For an informal conversation, contact Will at will@willbrett.info / 07979 696 265

1. Overview

[We're Right Here](#) is the national campaign for community power.

We are seeking support from an individual, consultant, contractor or agency with advanced expertise in community-building, organising and campaigning to significantly enhance our 'movement-building' efforts.

We are looking for an individual or group that is passionate about local, community action; inspired by the idea of local people having more power to shape their areas; and excited about the possibility of achieving a big shift in where power lies in this country.

The consultant/contractor/agency will work with the We're Right Here Campaign Team (including eight community leaders and representatives of the nine national organisations supporting the campaign) to **help us grow a powerful movement of community leaders and others committed to our goals**. Specifically they will:

- Propose and agree a purpose and approach for our enhanced 'movement-building' effort, one which allows us to channel the enthusiasm and passion of diverse community leaders around the country towards achieving significant national change
- Establish a group of 15-20 'community champions' from around the country – local community leaders from a broad range of backgrounds committed to our goals and ready to take action in support of them
- Design, agree and begin to execute an engagement strategy both for these community champions and our wider supporter base, empowering them to engage others with the campaign and pursue opportunities for impact
- Establish and begin to operate community management systems including contact databases, mailing lists and supporter journeys in a way which inspires more people to take more effective actions in support of our campaign

At the end of the contracted period, we want to have an enhanced movement-building function up and running within our campaign and ready to be continued either by the existing contractor or by other staffing arrangements.

While we set out some key 'deliverables' below, we are looking most of all for creativity and energy – both in response to the brief and in delivering it.

The work is expected to take place between November 2022 and February 2023. The budget is £20k-£25k including any VAT. Potential hard costs and expenses can be agreed separately (eg. for travel to meet community leaders, or to resource creative ideas to engage supporters). We invite applications from individuals, groups of individuals or registered entities.

Applicants should set out (in brief) why they support our campaign; their experience which qualifies them for this work; and how they would seek to deliver it. More detail about how to apply can be found below.

2. Relevant background on *We're Right Here*

Our vision

People should have the power to shape their places and communities should have the rights and tools they need to come together and take control of their own futures.

We believe in a community-powered UK, where people across the country find connection, purpose and pride in local action. Where decisions are made at the most local level possible, and people's understanding of and passion for their areas is embraced and put to good use. Where community organisations and groups are trusted and supported to get on with the work of improving their places, and public institutions work in genuine partnership with communities.

Our mission

The *We're Right Here* campaign is working to **build a united movement for community power**, spanning places and communities across the UK as well as the political spectrum.

We are campaigning for a [Community Power Act](#) to give communities more control over the spaces, services and spending decisions which shape their places and futures. We see this as the first step towards bringing about the fundamental change we need, and unlocking the power and potential contained within each and every one of our neighbourhoods.

Our governance and ways of working

Our campaign has been convened and is being supported by nine national organisations: Power to Change, New Local, Locality, The Cares Family, the Young Foundation, the People's Health Trust, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Local Trust and Friends Provident Foundation.

Importantly, our campaign team also includes eight grassroots community leaders who lead locally rooted organisations in areas across England. These individuals (who are listed on

our campaign website) are working in their local areas to fulfil a range of social missions. All agree, however, that we're stuck in a system which isn't working anymore – one built around public sector institutions which were designed to do things *to* communities and not *with* them. These community leaders are the driving force behind our campaign.

A 'Campaign Team', made up of the eight community leaders and representatives of the nine national organisations plus campaign director Will Brett, meet once a fortnight to agree strategy and actions. A 'Working Group' made up of staff from some of the nine national organisations is tasked with carrying out the decisions of this group.

Our campaign network

Over the course of the last two years, the *We're Right Here* campaign has brought together a strong and diverse network of individuals from across England who lead or are active in a wide variety of community organisations and groups.

In the summer of 2020, we ran a series of online workshops exploring the challenges facing these community leaders and activists; their experiences and understanding of power; and how their work could be made easier and more effective. These workshops were attended by over 120 leaders of locally rooted organisations and groups from every region of the UK. Crucially, they demonstrated that community organisations working across sectors and to advance a diverse array of social missions share a view that affecting change at the neighbourhood-level is made harder than it needs to be by common issues including a lack of physical space available for community use; insufficient funding; and local authority practices which create barriers to community action.

Having established that the community power agenda resonated with a broad range of organisations, we also used these workshops to pinpoint policy changes which they felt would have a meaningful and positive impact on their work. Holding these events further allowed us to identify potential candidates for our Campaign Team of community leaders, and we directly engaged with a significant proportion of the workshop participants to encourage them to consider playing an active role in the campaign.

This coalition-building effort resulted in over 150 representatives of community organisations and groups attending our campaign launch event in November 2021. Following this event, we continued to engage with this network of community leaders – holding a series of events to co-produce [our proposal for a Community Power Act](#) and develop our [open letter to the Government](#).

In June, we held a parliamentary rally which was attended by around 50 community leaders from across the country as well as 20 parliamentarians and a large group of policy professionals.

3. Our forward approach to movement-building

In recent months, we have explored how we might build upon this work to more effectively draw on and channel the campaigning energies of this network. Through these discussions, we have concluded that our forward approach to grassroots movement-building should be:

a) *Focused on the depth as well as the breadth of our network*

There is significant enthusiasm within our Campaign Team for mobilising more community organisations and groups under the banner of *We're Right Here*. Raising up voices capable of attesting both to the real-world impact of the work being carried out by locally rooted organisations in communities across the UK and to the ways in which this work could be catalysed through the decentralisation of power is at the core of our campaign strategy. In addition, our campaign has already demonstrated that it can serve as a rallying point for an otherwise relatively disparate coalition of community organisations working across sectors, in pursuit of a broad range of social missions and in a wide variety of settings.

But our engagement to date with community leaders and activists beyond those who sit on our Campaign Team has arguably lacked depth. We could do a lot more with a more deeply engaged group of community leaders committed to the campaign. For that reason, our chief focus will be on forging closer relationships with a group of community leaders and activists who might act as local champions of the campaign, as well as growing the total number of community organisations and groups who form a part of our network of supporters.

b) *Rooted in relationships between community leaders*

The community leaders who sit on our Campaign Team are eager to be actively involved in this work and have expressed a desire to draw on relational and community organising techniques in carrying it out. Through ensuring that our campaign network is underpinned by strong interpersonal relationships, we believe that we will increase both the effectiveness of our advocacy and the likelihood of our movement enduring – including beyond the lifespan of our campaign. This reflects our strategic desire to inspire action in support of the community power agenda over a sustained period, as this will almost certainly be required in order to overturn a status quo shaped over decades by strong centralising forces.

c) *Integrated with our political engagement work*

We will seek to design and deliver a programme of movement-building work aimed at once at strengthening our network of community leaders and reinforcing our core political engagement work.

Our campaign strategy is grounded in the view that change to unlock community power will not be brought about while our politics continues to be shaped by ideologies and belief

systems focused solely on central state and market-oriented solutions and which overlook the 'third pillar' of community. We are, accordingly, seeking to give definition to an emerging political movement for community power by emboldening and encouraging sympathetic politicians in each major party.

We are actively working to do this through building cross-party support for a Community Power Act, and have identified a list of 49 target MPs whom we are seeking to engage in this effort (either because we believe our agenda is likely to resonate with them or because of their position or portfolio). While we have had some success in making our case directly to these politicians, targeting our movement-building efforts so as to recruit local champions in the areas which they represent might offer a highly effective political engagement route for our campaign.

4. Activities/deliverables

The work is expected to take place between November 2022 and February 2023, with the potential for further work beyond that date. The goal of the work is to establish an enhanced 'movement-building' function within our campaign. The work is expected to include:

- Proposing and agreeing a purpose and approach for our enhanced 'movement-building' effort, one which allows us to channel the enthusiasm and passion of diverse community leaders around the country towards achieving national change
- Establishing a group of c.20 'community champions' from around the country – local community leaders from a broad range of backgrounds committed to our goals and ready to take action in support of them
- Designing, agreeing and beginning to execute an engagement strategy both for these community champions and our wider supporter base, empowering them to engage others with the campaign and pursue opportunities for impact
- Establishing and beginning to operate community management systems including contact databases, mailing lists and supporter journeys in a way which inspires more people to take more effective actions in support of our campaign

We encourage applicants to respond to this brief in their own way. This role will require a creative and ambitious response, so we do not want to prescribe exactly what activities are undertaken. But examples of the kinds of activity we might expect to be undertaking as part of the work include:

- Workshop(s) and one-to-ones with Campaign Team to establish shared approach to movement-building
- Mapping of existing networks of community leaders against relevant criteria, including aptitude for campaigning and political saliency of their location, to identify potential 'community champions'
- Relational meetings with potential 'community champions'

- Design and delivery of campaign actions for 'community champions' and wider supporters to take in support of our campaign
- Design and operation of internal systems for managing our supporter base, including contact databases and email journeys

The successful applicant will report directly to Campaign Director Will Brett, and will also attend fortnightly Campaign Team meetings to update on their work. It is also hoped that they will be able to attend a campaign 'retreat' taking place on 1st-3rd December 2022.

5. Your application

Please set out in a cover letter of no more than 1,000 words why you want the campaign to succeed; your relevant experience for this role; and how you would go about meeting the brief. Feel free to include relevant documents or links as attachments.

As part of your application, please set out an indicative budget for the work including how you have arrived at the figures (eg. by day rate). We have budgeted £20k-£25k for the whole period, and this would need to include any VAT. Expenses or hard costs can be considered separately.

For agencies or groups, please specify a named person who is responsible for the work and committed to building powerful working relationships both within We're Right Here and among our supporters.

Please email the cover letter and any relevant attachments to Will (will@willbrett.info) by COP 20th October 2022.

For an informal conversation about the work, please get in touch with Will at will@willbrett.info or 07979 696 265.