

Reaching Out: Empowering Young People - New Lottery Scheme Launched for Northern Ireland

Reaching Out: Empowering Young People is new Big Lottery Fund programme, designed to support some of Northern Ireland's most vulnerable young people, including those who have been in care, involved in crime or disengaged from education.

The programme has a total of £20 million available to distribute over the next two years. Individual grants of between £100,000 and £500,000 will be provided for projects which ensure young people have the necessary support structures, capacity, improved personal development and improved skills to help them negotiate the transitions in their life.

The funds can be used toward projects that will help these young people transform their lives through activities such as training and employment schemes, one-to-one crisis support, mentoring programmes and street outreach work.

Specifically, the funds will help groups undertaking projects which:

- * focus on young people aged between 8 and 20;
- * last from three to five years;
- * involve young people in designing, developing and running projects; and
- * target young people 'at risk'.

This is an open and competitive programme that will mainly make revenue grants. For this programme, 'at risk' means young people who are:

- * in care, leaving care or who have been in care;
- * engaging, or at risk of engaging, in criminal activity; or
- * disengaged from education.

Voluntary or community-led organisations in Northern Ireland are being invited to apply.

Applications may be accepted at any time.