

voice
east midlands



Voice East Midlands
BME Learning & Skills
Cluster Development Project

East Midlands
Voluntary and Community Sector Cluster



Nottinghamshire Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) Learning & Skills Cluster Development

- Q. *Is your organisation or group involved in providing learning and skills?*
- Q. *Would you like to be part of an exciting new approach to improving learning & skills for BME communities in Nottinghamshire?*

If the answer is YES then Voice East Midlands would like to hear from you.

Voice East Midlands are looking for 10-15 Nottinghamshire organisations / groups that have a learning & skills focus (or learning & skills providers) to become involved in developing a pilot BME learning & skills cluster.

- ***What is a cluster?***

In brief, a cluster is a group of industries and organisations that are linked together in buying and selling relationships, or who share the same infrastructure, customers or skills base and whose linkages enhance competitive advantage and improve efficiency.

- ***Cluster Development for the Voluntary & Community Sector.***

The success of any individual voluntary or community organisation depends partly on its own efforts, but also on its environment, which includes other voluntary groups and their actions. Voluntary sector cluster development is a tool for shaping this environment. Clusters are based on groups of organisations that already impact on each other in some way.

Cluster Development involves building on existing collaborations, relationships and networks. It encourages longer-term relationships and gives organisations the opportunity to improve the way they work together, to gain more control over their collective environment so that they can achieve their objectives more easily and effectively.

- ***BME Voluntary & Community Sector Cluster Development.***

The Voice East Midlands BME Voluntary & Community Sector Learning & Skills Cluster Development project is part of a wider East Midlands Development Agency (emda) led Cluster Development initiative for the East Midlands Voluntary & Community Sector. All nine regional development agencies (RDAs) throughout the UK are currently researching the prospect of cluster development to help develop their Voluntary & Community Sectors. This is an exciting new initiative and Voice East Midlands has worked closely with emda from the outset to ensure that the interests of the East Midlands BME Voluntary & Community Sector were (and continue to be) represented at every stage. Although emda led, the management and delivery of East Midlands Voluntary & Community Sector Cluster Development is very much a collaborative initiative. As such, a regional Cluster Development Leadership Group has been formed, consisting of a range of key regional organisations and individuals, such as emda / East Midlands Assembly / Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) / Engage East Midlands / Voice East Midlands / Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL) / Social Enterprise East Midlands (SEEM) / Learning & Skills Councils (LSC's) / East Midlands Funders Forum (EMFF) and others.

- **Nottinghamshire BME Voluntary & Community Sector Learning & Skills Cluster Development.**

In terms of BME Learning & Skills development, all nine RDAs throughout the UK have been given responsibility for developing a 'Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action' (FRESA). The responsibility for putting this framework into action at local levels will be devolved to localised agencies. A number of RDAs (including emda) have embraced the fact that 'Cluster Development' could help to deliver the FRESA (learning & skills agenda) at local levels, hence the link between learning & skills and cluster development, an example of which is the Voice East Midlands BME Learning & Skills Cluster Development Project.

Becoming involved in the Nottinghamshire BME Voluntary & Community Sector Learning & Skills Cluster Development Project should provide a number of opportunities for local organisations involved in learning & skills. For example, potentially there could be opportunities to:

- improve links with other learning & skills providers
- improve the way your organisation works and learn from others
- develop shared workloads and identify areas of good practice
- develop your organisation's profile
- unlock funding for the learning & skills sector
- become directly involved in influencing future East Midlands Voluntary & Community Sector development policies and initiatives
- help further develop the BME Learning & Skills agenda in Nottinghamshire

If your organisation / group is involved in the provision of learning & skills and you would like to improve the way you deliver your services to BME communities, why not try a new way of working with other similar organisations / groups in your area who are also interested in improving their overall performance and efficiency and ultimately improving learning & skills provision for BME communities in Nottinghamshire.

If you're up for the challenge, I would like to hear from you!

If you want to be part of this exciting new approach to improving learning & skills for BME communities in Nottinghamshire, or would like to know more, please contact;

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