

What is an Infrastructure Organisation?

To take part you must be employed by or volunteer for a local or regional **infrastructure organisation**.

By **infrastructure organisation**, we mean civil society (third sector) organisations whose main or only purpose is to **support the work of other groups** in the local voluntary and community sector. This purpose will usually appear in the governing document of your organisation or will be apparent from the work you have carried out. If supporting other organisations is not an explicit purpose in your governing document doing such work must be within the scope of the work your governing document allows you to do.

Your **infrastructure organisation** can be

- ✦ a registered charity
- ✦ a voluntary and community unincorporated charitable association
- ✦ a community benefit society registered as an industrial and provident society
- ✦ a community interest company
- ✦ an organisation of another type if you operate as a social enterprise and principally reinvest your surpluses for social benefit

You are not eligible if your **organisation** is

- ✦ a statutory organisation such as a school or local authority, including statutory organisations that have charitable status
- ✦ your work and services provided are solely for individuals
- ✦ an individual or sole trader
- ✦ make a surplus or profit which is not principally reinvested for social benefit
- ✦ are applying on behalf of another organisation.

An **infrastructure organisation** generally have a number of key functions (e.g from GAVCA)

- ✦ To enable the voluntary/community sector to identify, and appropriately meet, unmet needs and gaps in service provision (Development).
- ✦ To enhance the capacity of the voluntary and community sector by providing and promoting technical and practical support services (Support).
- ✦ To encourage networking, enabling the voluntary/community sector to share knowledge, information and skills, and to promote liaison between the voluntary, public and private sectors (Liaison).
- ✦ To ensure effective and accountable representation of voluntary and community sector views and interests (Representation).
- ✦ To broker an effective role for the voluntary/community sector at a strategic level (Strategic Partnerships).

Examples of **infrastructure organisations** include a local CVS, a volunteer centre, local Voluntary Action provider or specialist local support and development organisation.