



# Action!



Newsletter

Stop Press!

August 2010

## Voluntary and Community Action

### Voluntary and community sector asked for their ideas on how to do more for less



As *Action!* went to press the Government published an open letter to the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors asking them to contribute their ideas to help reduce the deficit. They are being asked to share ideas about how they can help reduce the deficit directly with the Office for Civil Society.

The government has indicated that tackling the deficit and restoring confidence in the economy is a high priority. Significant savings have been made across all areas of Government, but the deficit reduction plan is not just about cuts. It is also about finding better ways of doing things. **The deadline for responses is the 20 August 2010.** See Spending Challenge article over the page for information on how to submit your ideas.

Voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations are being asked to share their innovative ideas of how things can be done more efficiently. Those in the sector have a wealth of experience from delivering services on the frontline, often in the most disadvantaged areas, and can see what is working well and what can be improved.

Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd, said:

“We know that it is local people and organisations on the ground that often know what needs changing and we want to tap into their knowledge and experience to help us identify ways of doing things better and more efficiently so we can do more for less.

The voluntary, community and social enterprise sector do really important and much valued work on the front line delivering services and that is why they are best placed to identify what the state does well and what could be improved.”

### Open letter to the voluntary and community sector

A copy of the letter to voluntary, community, social enterprise sectors can be found at: <http://download.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/voluntary/open-letter.pdf>

The sector can contribute ideas at the spending challenge (explained overleaf) website: <http://spendingchallenge.hm-treasury.gov.uk/>

Ideas and examples from the sector can be posted on the Cabinet Office website or e-mailed directly to [sectorchallenge@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sectorchallenge@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk).

Further information can be obtained from the Cabinet Office Press Office, 22 Whitehall London SW1A 2WH, Tel: 020 7276 0400 , Fax: 020 7276 1146

## Spending Challenge

The Spending Challenge is your chance to help shape the way government works. The government need to reduce the deficit and are considering ways of cutting public spending that it believes is fair and responsible.



## Your idea

Share your idea with the government. Your idea could be small-scale, but quick and easy to put into action. It could be more radical, involving significant changes to where and how government works. Either way, please be specific with enough detail to enable your idea to be implemented.

They will consider as many ideas as possible and the best ones will be considered as part of the Spending Review 2010, which will be concluded on 20 October 2010.

In addition to this site, they have also struck up a partnership with Facebook, who have set up a debate section on the Spending Challenge in their Democracy UK area.

Ministers will be also hosting seminars and travelling up and down the country to hear opinions and ideas first hand. These will be shaped by the comments and suggestions made in the Spending Challenge, so if you have an idea, don't hesitate. Let them know and help shape the tough decisions that need to be made. It is also an opportunity for you to stress what is important to the sector.

## How to contribute your ideas

On the Spending Challenge site you can:

- submit your ideas using the electronic form
- get updates from us on the Spending Challenge and the main themes and ideas coming in

In coming up with your idea, you might want to consider the questions set out in the Treasury's Spending Review Framework:

- is the activity essential to meet government priorities?
- does the government need to fund this activity?
- does the activity provide substantial economic value?
- can the activity be targeted to those most in need?
- how can the activity be provided at lower cost?
- how can the activity be provided more effectively?
- can the activity be provided by a non-state provider or by citizens, wholly or in partnership?
- can non-state providers be paid to carry out the activity according to the results they achieve?
- can local bodies as opposed to central government provide the activity?

The government will consider as many ideas as possible and the best ones will be considered as part of the Spending Review. The conclusions of the Spending Review, which will set out four year spending plans for all government departments as well as considering other areas of spending including welfare, will be published on 20 October 2010.