

## Delivering social value – What it means to you?

Growing Kent & Medway (GKM) works to deliver inclusive economic growth so that all communities in the region can contribute to, and benefit, from an uplift in regional prosperity. This can be achieved through a range of engagement mechanisms.

The focus of this engagement is on raising awareness and advancing opportunities in horticulture, food and drink production and the enabling technology industries. For example, social value could include raising awareness around career pathways or around nutrition and wellbeing through community engagement.

Beneficiaries of GKM grants are asked to contribute towards the social value aspirations of GKM. As a condition of receiving grant funding, you will be asked to commit a certain level of time towards a social value activity within the region; the amount of time to be committed will be dependent upon the size of grant received.

We recognise that some businesses may already have in place well established mechanisms to deliver Corporate Social Responsibility e.g., volunteering days for employees. However, for others this may be a less familiar concept and it might be helpful to think about – People, Skills, and Place which aligns strongly with the UK Government's levelling up agenda. It is not the intention of GKM to prescribe what you could do but some suggestions are made below.

### Delivering social value – what level of commitment is required?

There is no fixed requirement for the level of social value commitment that any one project should deliver but any activity/engagement must be undertaken within the Kent and Medway region or within the UK if it relates to the horticultural and plant-based food and drink sector. However, as a guideline for the Business Innovation Vouchers, GKM suggests a commitment of two days from participating businesses:

One day of which will be on your GKM story. We see your story being a fundamental activity to demonstrate what you have achieved, how GKM has been instrumental in bringing about change, maybe to form the basis of a wider case study for GKM and most importantly, to inspire the next cohort of would-be businesses in the region in the horticultural and plant-based food and drink sector. We ask that you participate, together with GKM communications team, to create your GKM story which could include a video and/or some written content.

The second day would be based upon your own plans for delivering social value which you may already be doing or may want to explore other routes to delivering social value in the region within the sector we operate in. Some suggestions are outlined in the following section.

## GKM grant funding – What are your plans for delivering social value?

As part of the application process we ask you to make a commitment to delivering social value and provide an opportunity to outline your plans. When outlining your social value plan we want you to describe what you plan to deliver and the impact this will have in the Kent and Medway region and on you and your team. As a guide some examples of social value could be (but not limited to):

- Promoting career pathways in horticulture, food and drink production and the enabling technology industries, through activities in local schools and career fairs or hosting students in your workplace.
- Skills and training activities delivered – within your own businesses, or with and for, the benefit of others.
- Business mentoring - GKM is running a mentorship programme and can help to support business mentoring activity if this is of interest to you.
- Open days for the public or targeted groups at your business premises where you can showcase your business and project and inspire others to become more sustainable e.g. participation in LEAF's Open Farm Sundays.
- Working together with the GKM communications team to identify GKM organised events where you could act as a GKM ambassador, this could include presenting on your project, exhibiting your product or service and speaking about what GKM has enabled you to do.
- Commitment to working with existing community engagement activities, be it local community groups, organisations, events or initiatives to deliver social value relevant to your project/business, particularly around careers pathways, nutrition and wellbeing.
- GKM could help connect you to audiences through their connections in the region so if you have an audience in mind but don't know how to reach them, outline this in your plan at the application stage.
- You may also want to refer to the following website for additional guidance, Social Value UK <https://socialvalueuk.org>.

The social value question will not be scored but the answers provided will be considered when assessing the applications submitted. **Applicants who fail to commit to delivering social value will be ineligible for funding.** GKM will monitor and evaluate the impact of the social value activities that are undertaken by the projects funded. This evaluation may include GKM contacting you with requests for information during or after the completion of project activities.