

Compact Advocacy Case Study: Joined-Up Holidays

The Problem:

Joined-Up Holidays are a small organisation made up completely of volunteers. They had been given an “in principle” agreement by their Regional Development Agency One North East to their funding application to support disabled children and their families.

As part of the funding agreement, Joined-Up Holidays would seek match funding, which they did over a period of months. After securing match funding they went back to One North East and were then told the eligibility criteria had changed and they were no longer able to support the application.

This change in criteria had occurred several months previously but the organisation had not been told. This not only put the match funding and the project itself at risk, but also meant nearly a year’s worth of fundraising and planning had been wasted and the organisation was now liable for fees on a bridging loan they could no longer take out.

The Compact issue:

2.6 Assess the implications for the sector of new policies, legislation and guidance, aiming to reduce the bureaucratic burden, particularly on small organisations.

3.12 Apply the Compact when distributing European funding. Where conflicts arise with European regulations, discuss the potential effects and agree solutions together

4.3 Where there are restrictions or changes to future resources, discuss with CSOs the potential implications as early as possible, give organisations the opportunity to respond, and consider the response fully, respecting sector expertise, before making a final decision.

The Action:

The Compact Advocacy Programme helped Joined-Up Holidays challenge One North East and asked for a meeting to discuss ways forward. This was agreed.

The Outcome:

Representatives from both sides, along with a Compact Advocate met to discuss the situation. One North East acknowledged its failure to communicate the change in eligibility criteria and apologised for this.

They then agreed to fast track one part of the application, which would ensure that some of the work could progress and also agreed to increase the grant in order to cover the fees for the loan that the organisation was liable for.

Although the project is still facing a delay and more funding will be needed to cover the lost grant, Joined-Up Holidays is at least able to move on, can cover costs they have incurred and perhaps most importantly, they and One North East have reached an understanding and have found a way forward.