

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

INFORMATION ABOUT OUR SHORTER PROGRAMMES

1) Is there a structure to the programmes?

Each programme is structured slightly differently. All of our programmes are facilitated by one of our Project Managers and have a team of Pilotlighters who will be working on the strategic issue or challenge presented to them. Before the start of the project, your allocated Project Manager will be in touch to finalise the brief (which summarises the context of the issue, the issue itself and the sub-themes or questions that will be explored) that the Pilotlighters will be working on. A charity representative will be required to attend some meetings (differs according to the programme) and to respond to any query the team has while working on the brief.

Initiatives such as our 90-minute “Conversation for Change” takes place in one session where a charity leader will present a big picture strategic challenge to a group of Pilotlighters. The group will coach the charity leader to explore the challenge, unlock fresh thinking and new perspectives. At the end of the session, the charity leader will agree the actions they will take forward and implement.

With the more in-depth engagements, the project is structured in 3 phases:

- 1) Exploratory or research & analyses phase
- 2) Development of recommendations and next steps phase
- 3) Presentation phase

Charities’ representatives will need to be present in Phase 1 to present their organisation and strategic challenge to the Pilotlighters. Phase 2 is when Pilotlighters put in the work. At this stage you will need to be available to respond to any query or information requests the team may have. Phase 3 is when the Pilotlighters present their findings and recommendation back to the charity.

Every organisation’s needs are different, so every project is different, and our Project Managers are very skilled at getting the best out of each team to help organisations achieve their aims.

2) What will be the involvement of our board on these shorter programmes?

Your board needs to be bought into, and willing to engage with, the programme. They should also agree on the strategic importance of the issue being considered and be open to the recommendations and findings that come out of the programme.

We would expect Pilotlight and the programme to be an agenda item at board meetings and for progress and updates to be shared with your board over the course of the project.

3) Can other members of our senior team participate in the programmes?

In short, yes. We need someone who has responsibility for sign-off of the particular issue to be involved in the programme. However, the day-to-day contact throughout the project can be someone else in your organisation who is best placed to answer any questions throughout the programme.

When we carry out an assessment call to determine whether Pilotlight support could be beneficial, we normally ask the CEO (or equivalent) as well as the expected point of contact from the charities side to be present.

4) Will the programmes be run virtually, or will meetings be face-to-face?

Currently, due to Covid-19, all project meetings are being conducted virtually over Zoom.

APPLYING TO THE PROGRAMMES

1) Who can apply?

We work with charities and social enterprises registered in the UK, who are tackling social disadvantage. We do not work with organisations that discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, or any other similar categories or organisations who proselytise to service users.

2) Does our organisation need to be a registered charity to apply?

No, it doesn't need to be a registered charity – we accept applications from a wide range of charitable organisations and social enterprises. However, it is key that your organisation works primarily to tackle social disadvantage.

3) We applied to Pilotlight last year/2 years ago, etc – can we apply again?

If you have applied to Pilotlight in the past and were unsuccessful, you are still able to apply now. However, please consider, if the reason that you were unsuccessful before still applies.

If you took part in one of our shorter programmes and wish to apply to work on another strategic issue you are facing, you are also welcome to apply. Please reach out to the Charity Partnerships team to discuss your circumstances in more detail, if you are unsure what the next best step is for you and your organisation.

4) We participated in the longer, holistic Pilotlight Programme before – can we apply?

Yes, you can. The nature of our shorter-term strategic programmes is fundamentally different to that of our longer programmes, in that the team of Pilotlighters will be working on a specific strategic issue, rather than considering your organisation as a whole. Many organisations that have been through the 10-month Pilotlight Programme benefit from one of our shorter programmes as well.

5) How do we apply?

You will need to fill out a Digital Application Form on our website by clicking on the "[Apply Now](#)" button. As well as providing the information requested, please attach the Proposed Information Form to your application.

6) What makes a good application?

The best applications show a clear understanding of the strategic issue at hand and articulate how they expect Pilotlighters to be able to help them.

7) What sort of issues will you not be able to support with?

We are unable to offer specialist support. This means that these programmes are not suited to those wishing to receive specialist support on areas including but not limited to, marketing, technology, succession planning etc.

While we can support with different aspects of income generation and diversification, our Pilotlighters are often not best placed to provide support specific to the grant funding

landscape that you operate within. We would strongly encourage you to have a conversation with our Charity Partnerships team on charitypartnerships@pilotlight.org.uk if you are facing a fundraising challenge to receive tailored advice.

8) What happens after we apply?

We will review all applications on a rolling basis and will review the application with a view to determining what kind of support may be most suitable. We may contact you at this point if we need to clarify information in your application. If you are shortlisted, we will carry out an assessment call to discuss the potential brief in more detail. Spots are filled on a first come first served basis, so we encourage you to apply as soon as possible!

9) What happens if our application is unsuccessful?

If you are not successful – either at application stage or following assessment – we will contact you to let you know and give you some feedback about why you weren't successful. If relevant we will also share details of other organisations that might be able to support you.

You may decide to apply again in the future if circumstances change. We will also consider whether the type of support needed is more suitable for another programme and advise you accordingly. You can [sign up to our newsletter](#) to receive our latest news and opportunities for charities.

AFTER THE PROGRAMME

1) What happens after I complete on of the shorter programmes?

At the end of your programme you will be presented with a set of recommendations/insights for you to take away and digest, discuss, debate and – hopefully - implement. Some of the programmes might see you receiving detailed analyses and research-backed recommendations as well as implementation plans.

If you'd like further support, it may be possible to participate in one of our other programmes if relevant. We have a number of different programmes to support our charity and social enterprise partners over time and we would encourage you to check our website regularly for these opportunities. Please feel free to speak to your Project Manager about these or contact the Charity Partnerships team on charitypartnerships@pilotlight.org.uk

You will also be a part of our strong group of charity alumni and can opt-in to continue to receive information from Pilotlight.

2) Who do I contact if I have more questions not on this list?

Please contact charitypartnerships@pilotlight.org.uk with any additional questions you have or clarifications you need.

You can also attend one of our [online information sessions](#) which will give you a chance to learn more about our programmes and hear from Pilotlight Partner Charities and Pilotlighters. Please see our website for more details.