**Comic Relief**

**HIV in the UK: Think Digital Open 10 April closes 19th of May**

We are inviting applications to create, adapt, scale up or roll out digital solutions to respond to HIV in the UK.

**About the initiative**

More than 30 years on from the start of the AIDS epidemic in the UK, the landscape is unrecognisable from that of the 1980s. The availability of effective HIV treatment means people living with HIV can lead a long and healthy life. However, there are now more people living with HIV in the UK than ever before. In 2015 an estimated 101,200 people were living with HIV in the UK, and of these, 13,000 did not know about their HIV infection. Many people receive a late diagnosis, meaning they start treatment later which affects life expectancy and increases complications; stigma and discrimination continue to be a major challenge in the UK.

This initiative will support organisations who are using technology in innovative and inspiring ways to respond to the ever-changing HIV landscape in the UK.

Proposals are particularly welcome which aim to address the following priorities:

* Improve the quality of life for people living with HIV, particularly those who are 50+;
* Increase access to services which enable prompt diagnosis of HIV and contribute to HIV prevention;
* Address misinformation and the stigma surrounding HIV.

The technological responses can include digital solutions for sector practitioners and those which make services work more effectively behind the scenes, as well as those for people living with HIV or those at highest risk of contracting HIV. We’ll support simple and low tech solutions such as videos, sms messaging and social media as long they make the best use of people’s current digital behaviour and not primarily face to face working.

A wide range of digital innovations will be considered and our aim is to fund projects that:

* Are focused on specific user needs, and current digital behaviours in their design, delivery and development
* Make best use of web, mobile or internet based technologies, whether this is hardware or software development
* Have potential to scale and be adopted by others
* Disrupt and challenge existing ways of delivering services
* Involve collaborations between those delivering vital support services and digital agencies to ensure their reach, user involvement and technical rigour

Applicants must be able to demonstrate they follow best practice in digital design and development – see <https://www.gov.uk/design-principles>

**Funding available**

In order to encourage organisations to innovate and respond to the challenges present in the HIV sector, we have partnered with the MAC AIDS fund. We anticipate making up to 10 grants from a total fund of £450,000.

* Grants can be for between £20,000-£80,000, and over a period of 6 - 18 months.
* We will fund digital solutions at any stage of development (from idea stage to those wishing to roll out existing solutions). You will need to have an identified digital partner (or in house digital expertise) in place at the point of applying for funding.
* We are particularly interested to understand the sustainability and revenue models for the technological solution, so please reflect on this in the application.
* We welcome proposals from the HIV sector and beyond, including unusual collaborations, such as those working together to develop new solutions alongside design or digital agencies.
* The grant will include additional support from social-tech experts, which will include a one day start up workshop at the start of the grant, connections to tech experts, on-going mentoring and two peer learning days.
* Applicants should budget for three trips to London to attend these sessions.
* We expect that for those projects at an early stage of development, the first three months will be dedicated to research, ideas development, user testing or piloting, before development and delivery work begins in full over the remaining life of the project.

**Eligibility**

Organisations or partnerships applying to this initiative must meet Comic Relief’s general eligibility requirements. In addition:

* Grants are available for organisations based in the UK for work in the UK.
* There is no restriction on the annual income of the organisation or partnership applying for a grant.
* There is no restriction on applying for this grant if you have another grant with Comic Relief.
* We will not fund pure research for the duration of the grant, however, we will support research as part of the grant that results in the creation of a tangible solutions and would expect user-centred research and design processes to be followed throughout.

Please review our grant making policies and FAQs for details of our eligibility criteria for all organisations applying to Comic Relief for funding (see links below).

**Key dates and process**

We will be open for proposals from 10th April 2017 to midday on 19th May 2017. As part of your application you will need to produce a short video (max 3 minutes) outlining your project idea. This should be published on a public site such as YouTube or Vimeo without being password protected and a hyperlink given within the application form. Note: that the rest of the application form will not be made publicly available, and you can remove or protect the content after 15th August.

Once we receive your proposal, we will initially check whether your organisation and proposal are eligible for funding under this initiative and then shortlist the strongest proposals to go through for a full assessment. We will aim to notify all applicants of our decisions at this stage by the end of June. If your proposal is unsuccessful at this stage, we will be unable to provide any additional feedback due to our limited resources. Assessments of the shortlisted proposals will take place during July 2017 and final decisions will be made by our Grants Committee and Trustees. We aim to inform all applicants of the final decision in early October 2017. If your proposal is unsuccessful at this stage we will offer further feedback by phone.

**Applications through the Comic Relief Website - http://www.comicrelief.com**