

Government releases £1.2m for innovation in autism services and to increase autism awareness in England

The Department of Health has opened applications for its Innovation Fund. The National Autistic Society successfully campaigned for this fund during the *Push for Action* campaign.

£1.2 million of funding is now available to improve local autism services and increase awareness. The funding is available as part of *Think Autism*, the update to the 2010 Adult Autism Strategy for England. The funding is split between Innovation Fund projects (£1 million) and national coordination of an awareness and champions network (£200,000). There is no upper limit set for individual bids, nor are there any set local or regional allocations for the funding.

The Department is inviting proposals for innovation projects in these four areas:

- Advice and information;
- Gaining and growing skills for independence;
- Early intervention and crisis prevention;
- Employment, particularly involving the use of apprenticeships.

Funding can be bid for by local Authorities, NHS organisations, third sector/voluntary sector organisations, commercial organisations, and Individuals, in co-production with any of the above.

The Department are also seeking a third sector/voluntary organisation or a small consortium to deliver the national co-ordination of the awareness and champions network.

Applications should be made by **Tuesday 26 August 2014**. A further £3 million of capital funding is expected at a later date. For more information, please see the [Department of Health website](#)