Using Insight to attract funding

City of Football Bid

£1.6 million of funding



Nottingham City by successfully bringing together a group of private, public and voluntary sector partners (over 40 organisations) including a very close collaboration with the city's Creative Quarter (Nottingham's creative network where business, art and technology come together) has been named as the first City of Football securing 1.6 million pounds.

Phil Smith, Sport England's Director of Sport commented : "We're delighted to name Nottingham as Sport England's City of Football. Football is this country's most popular team sport but there is still a real capacity to grow. Nottingham has an exciting and inventive response to the challenge of getting more people to play the game and we will look forward to working with them to make this happen."

One of the key strengths of Nottingham's bid was the focus on using *insight* to respond to the challenge of getting more people playing football and specifically targeting the 14-25 age group in the city.

What we did

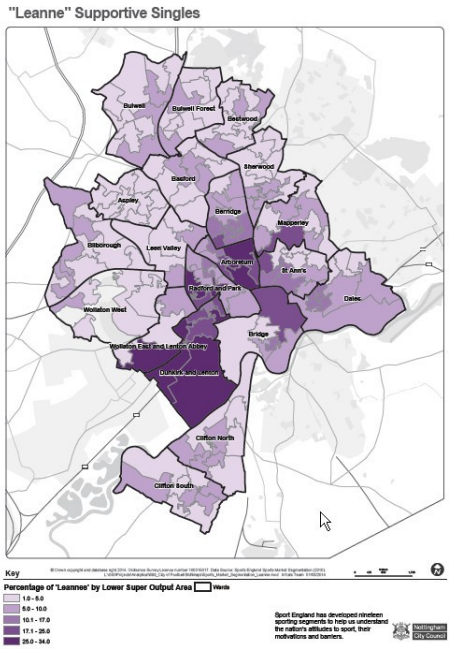
Cities were invited to submit bids from the National Lottery for £1.6 million. Emphasis was placed on Insight in the bids (approx 30% of the content) to highlight what barriers existed and how the city intended to tackle these barriers.

For example, we used Insight to understand how the sport is currently structured, who is playing now, where they play, where they live, the role of volunteering, how numbers in the sport have changed over time, the ethnic and gender breakdown of who is playing etc. This insight provided a wealth of information. One example being the number of female adult teams has increased by 35% between 2012/13 to 2013/14, however overall the number of teams has decreased by 95 from 2012/13 to 2013/14.

To help identify where latent demand in the city existed, Sport England's Sporting Segmentation datasets was used to identify which of the 19 Sport England's Sporting Market Segmentation groups were interested in playing football but for numerous reasons were unable to easily access the sport. These groups were mapped to find out where they lived in the city against existing provision. The Sporting segmentation tool was used to understand how best to communicate with these different

groups. For example digital forms of communication, e-mail, social media, text messages, poster campaigns etc. over perhaps more traditional methods of communication such as leaflet drops, direct mail etc. Other forms of analysis in the bid included using Geographical Information Systems to map the current provision of sports grounds, playing fields in the city (as well as identifying potential sites where football could be played). This highlighted how 20% of the city has been identified as a “green playing pitch”.

We identified low car ownership in the city as a barrier and carried out accessibility mapping, to ensure we were providing facilities in the right locations for those who will be accessing them.



One of the three key Sport England’s Segments we are looking to target is the following:-

“Leanne” has a young profile 18-25.

There are a high number of Leanne’s in the city (18,629), likely to have children, however one of the least active segment for her age group.

Including data from Nottingham Insight we know the following:-

9.5% of households are lone parents with dependent children

(this is higher than the national average).

50% of the city’s population is aged under 30.

What the impact was

Nottingham City has become the first City of Football and secured funding of £1.6 million which will be used to increase the number of people engaging and playing in the sport, specifically targeting the 14-25 age group across the city. The benefits of this engagement will be far reaching: increasing self esteem, health and well-being of the participants, building communities, support and friendship groups, breaking down barriers and passing a passion for the sport on to the next generation.

Next Steps

The next steps will be to work together with various partners to ensure the project is a success where different elements of the project can be implemented in other cities and to other sports around the country.