

Benchmarking local authority commitments to food: a regional approach

Expression of interest form for prospective regional partners

May 2023

Sustain is looking for a project partner to benchmark and stimulate local authority commitments to good food in their region. For over 10 years, Sustain has mapped and reported on Greater London's borough level commitments to healthy and sustainable food through the Good Food for All Londoners annual survey and report. Supported by the Greater London Authority, it is an effective tool for improving good food practice and policy among London councils, by raising awareness of proven good food schemes and of the organisations that run them, and providing an additional incentive for London councils to sign-up. Our objective is to replicate this approach in one other region, explore with other regions that want to take a similar approach and create a benchmarking tool available to all local authorities in the UK.

This document is for prospective regional partners and includes:

1. Context – why are we scaling the Good Food for All Londoners approach?
2. Aspirations for replication - the targeted regional approach (alongside London)
 - a. Why implement a Good Food for All Londoners approach in a region?
 - b. Achieving impact in a region – core elements for replication
 - c. Budget and commitments
3. Expression of interest for our regional partner– timescales and process
4. Other ways to be involved

1. Context – why are we scaling the Good Food for All Londoners approach?

UK councils have an important role to play in creating a more healthy and sustainable food system so residents can access affordable, healthy and climate and nature friendly food.

Our Good Food for All Londoners approach involves mapping and reporting on local authority commitments across London on a range of fundamental good food measures. Over time, we have developed a well-recognised and respected benchmarking tool which highlights council achievements, tells a city-wide narrative on food and showcases innovative work, projects and campaigns from different groups to push the good food agenda further. Over the last decade of benchmarking, the approach has created significant impact, with 31 out of the 33 London councils doing more to improve the food available to their residents, workers and school pupils.

Our objective is to replicate this approach in other parts of the UK so that more local authorities prioritise good food and commit to action on a breadth of food issues (including, but also beyond just health). Initially, we will work with one regional partner (alongside London) to adapt and replicate core parts of the London approach. Over time, we hope other regions will use the framework to benchmark action by local councils. Alongside this, we aim to create a consistent and inclusive benchmarking tool, available to all local authorities in the UK. For the first time, this will support a collective, national voice for councils and promote opportunities for collaboration on our most pressing food issues.

2. Aspirations for replication – the targeted approach (working alongside London)

Initially, we are looking for one regional partner to pilot replication of a Good Food for All Londoners approach in their region over three years. Our regional partner should already operate in the region and be committed to promoting a breadth of food measures and a wider food systems approach to local authorities.

a. Why implement a Good Food for All Londoners approach in a region?

Benefits for a regional partner include:

- Improve prioritisation of good food across more local authorities, and improve access to and relationships with more regional local authorities.
- Cement the region’s profile (locally and nationally) as progressing the good food agenda whilst feeding into a national picture of local authority action on food
- Provide the region with a better understanding of local performance and opportunities for focus
- Help regions to work on long term solutions e.g. beyond crisis food provision, and cement ideas on food systems thinking
- Potentially increase local commissioning of good food projects, complimenting and catalysing local innovation and commitments

b. Achieving impact in a region – core elements for replication

Core elements of the Good Food for All Londoners approach are detailed in the table below. To achieve the greatest impact in a region, we are looking for a partner able to deliver on all core elements. We are inviting prospective partners to consider which other elements they could deliver in addition to add value (beyond the core). We have highlighted where either Sustain or a regional partner would lead on individual elements, however, we would like to work collaboratively with our partner to build a mutually beneficial relationship and co-design the approach.

Good Food for All Londoners approach	Activity to be led by regional partner	Activity to be led by Sustain with input from regional partner
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<p>Core essential elements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage local authorities in the benchmarking tool and offer support with participation ● Organise a launch event to celebrate results ● Create case studies linked to measures ● Support metro-mayor and regional political buy in ● Host regular, in person meetings between local authorities to promote solutions ● Promote findings of report nationally, regionally and locally (co-lead) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agree measures for the benchmarking tool ● Publish maps online to show performance across councils on key measures ● Co-ordinate replication workshops to establish relationship with regional partner, regular check ins with partner and oversight of agreed project management tools ● Monthly newsletter to UK wide local authority audience ● Funding reports to project funder ● Promote findings of report nationally, regionally and locally (co-lead)
<p>Optional elements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop an ‘annual focus’ or campaign for local authorities based on results ● Host awards as part of launch event ● Profile regional innovation as part of communications ● Create a printed, regional report to share results and in time, to include a league table for a ‘healthy race’ to the top 	

c. Budget and deliverables

Sustain has a total budget of £68,000 (inclusive of VAT) available to support the delivery of core and other elements as detailed above, ideally to be matched by the partner (e.g in kind) up until Spring 2026. We anticipate delivery at regional level to include (but not be limited to) the following core elements each year. The split of the budget over the three years is indicative:

- Year 1 - £20k (beginning shortly after July 2023)
 - Agree regional model, funding and deliverables
 - Create / recruit delivery role at regional level
 - Establish regional measures

- Promote project regionally and raise awareness of benchmarking tool with local authorities
- Establish local authority support structure for benchmarking participation
- Year 2 - £23k
 - Engage local authorities in benchmarking tool
 - Publish maps, data and case studies online
 - Promote findings locally, regionally and nationally
 - Regional launch event to celebrate results
 - Gather regional political buy in / metro-mayor support
 - Regular review of regional approach
- Year 3 - £25k
 - Engage local authorities in benchmarking tool
 - Publish maps, data and case studies online
 - Promote findings locally, regionally and nationally
 - Regional launch event to celebrate results
 - Regular review of regional approach
 - Host regular in person meetings with local authorities
 - Explore opportunities for funding beyond year 3

We are grateful to Impact on Urban Health for their funding and support to make this work possible.

3. Expressions of interest for our regional partner – timescales and process

We would like expressions of interest of no more than 3 sides including:

- Your name, email address and contact number
- An introduction to your region and local authorities (including how you currently work with or engage councils in your region in food)
- Your current approach to food and how this compliments your work

Plus, your responses to the following questions:

- Outline how you would deliver all of the above core elements of the approach, and any of the other elements over the three years of the project?
- Who would be delivering the work and how many days would the funding cover i.e. day rate?
- Do you have match funding or an in-kind contribution that could support this work?

Expressions of interest should be sent to Hannah.Crump@sustainweb.org by COP 30th June. Those submitting will be asked to attend a call with the Sustain team to discuss their EOI w/c 10th July, after which, we will appoint a partner and organise an exploratory kick off workshop with replication specialist, Spring Impact.

Please direct any questions to Hannah and do get in touch if you'd like to book in a call ahead of the submission date to discuss requirements further (calls will be taken w/c 5th June and onwards).

4. Other ways to be involved

We have funding to support one regional partner. However, there are other ways regions can be involved in this replication and roll out including:

- Deliver all or some of the elements detailed in the table above in your region using your existing capacity and resources
- Encourage councils in your region to use the national benchmarking tool when the annual questionnaire is launched (in Year 2)
- Feeding into the UK wide set of benchmarking measures (in Year 1)

If on reading the brief you are interested in being involved, but not leading a funded regional replication, please do contact us and let us know your ideas.

**Contact: Hannah Crump, Local Policy Coordinator, Sustain. Hannah.Crump@sustainweb.org
www.sustainweb.org**