Getting help to set up and run a connecting service

Why set up a connecting service?
Support for people with learning disabilities is changing. Young people are voting with their feet away from traditional centre-based services, and family carers are demanding better lives for their relatives in their own communities. In the future personal budgets will allow people and their families to tailor support more closely to what they want. Connecting can help them achieve this.

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Who can set up a connecting service?
Connecting can be provided by:
- Existing service providers
- Family carers, either on their own or with others
- Self advocate groups
- Social entrepreneurs.

How we can help you
We know that many people need help to get things going. Our expert help is designed to:

- **Think through the business side of things.** This includes business planning – what can you offer, what are your costs, your income streams, how to market the service?
- **Find sources of start-up funding.** This might be a business loan, a development grant or local charitable fundraising.
- **Help to recruit and train staff.** We use leading figures to help you identify the right people to be connectors. We can design individual training packages or link you in with regional training.
- **Support to manage and supervise staff.** Top tips for developing your staff.
- **Networking.** Everyone using our training will be enrolled as a member of the Community of Practice. This allows you to keep up-to-date with what’s going on.
- **Foundation’s Connecting People Development Fund.** We may be able to provide financial support in the form of small grants to help organisations establish connecting services.

See how connecting changed Anoop’s life
www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/community-connecting

To find out more about how we can help and funding opportunities from the please contact:
Molly Mattingly
mmattingly@fpld.org.uk
www.learningdisabilities.org.uk

Connecting is a skilled, time-limited role, that helps people make relationships based on mutual need or interest.

Our work over the past 10 years has found that connecting helps in a number of ways:

- **Real inclusion.** It is not just about being in the community or doing things, it is about finding a valued role.
- **Fulfilling lives.** People say they have more varied and interesting lifestyles.
- **Safer.** People are more likely to be safe when they are surrounded by people who know and care about them, but who are not necessarily paid to be in their lives.
- **Value for money.** Connecting helps to better target support and can reduce the need for expensive paid care.