

Accessibility 2020 Fund Update

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1. Background

- 1.1 As part of mitigation planning for the retention of Pacers and non PRM-TSI complaint rolling stock in 2020, a fund of £250k was proposed by Arriva Rail North to the combined authorities affected: SYPTE, TfGM and WYCA, to recognise that those most impacted by the retention of Pacers are customers with accessibility needs.
- 1.2 The Accessibility 2020 fund is proposed to be overseen by the Northern Accessibility User Group (NAUG). The highly inclusive Group is independently chaired by Mark Wilson OBE, who has background as a Senior Civil Servant, predominantly at the Department for Work & Pensions. Its membership represents a wide spectrum of disability groups and charities reflecting a wide range of accessibility needs.
- 1.3 Given their experience, and range of representation, the NAUG are best placed to advise on how the £250,000 should be invested for the maximum benefit of older and disabled customers.
- 1.4 The NAUG benefits from members with senior positions in leading organisations including Age UK and Disability Equality North West, who have significant experience in allocating funds and providing appropriate levels of governance and oversight to third-sector organisations.

2. What is the purpose of fund?

- 2.1 The fund is committed to be used in the following areas:
 - Projects relating to improving and promoting the use of Northern services and stations for older and disabled people
 - Initiatives relating to staff training
 - Schemes determined to be beneficial by the NAUG for older and disabled people using rail.
- 2.2 Any schemes which provide a commercial return to Northern, or form part of Franchise commitments or otherwise would be considered business as usual activity will not be eligible for funding.
- 2.3 Existing funding sources such as the DfT 'Access for All' programme and Franchise Station Improvement Fund focus on physical station improvement works, therefore proposals for engineering works at stations will not be considered.
- 2.4 Proposals should be deliverable within 12 months of receiving funding and commence within the calendar year of 2020.

3. Who can apply to fund?

- 3.1 The fund will be open to applications from individuals, community groups, charities, not for profit organisations and Northern colleagues.

www.northernrailway.co.uk

- 3.2 To maximise interest, participation and quality of applications, the fund will be promoted by NAUG members, and by Northern through stakeholder networks and online channels.
- 3.3 Proposals can be made in writing by e-mail, or in person to the Review Panel on request, to provide the opportunity for everyone to apply.

4. How will proposals be reviewed?

- 4.1 A 'Review Panel' will be selected from NAUG members, chaired by Mark Wilson and supported by three Northern colleagues, to provide additional support and expertise in evaluating proposals relating to railway activity.

5. Administration and management of fund

- 5.1 Arriva Rail North will transfer the £250k fund to a nominated NAUG community bank account requiring co-signatories, one of which will be a Northern representative.
- 5.2 Funds will be released to projects on the successful completion of milestones agreed, to provide appropriate oversight of the use of funds.

6. How will Northern support the fund?

- 6.1 Craig Alexander, Travel Integration & Accessibility Manager will lead support the Accessibility 2020 Fund, drawing upon Northern's expertise of managing and allocating funds, such as the Customer & Community Fund.
- 6.2 Northern commits to supporting the development and promotion of successful schemes where possible, including promoting through Press Office activity, online and via Social Media.
- 6.3 Northern will consider supporting proposals with delivery, including project management on a case by case basis, at the application stage. Where possible, applications should have the involvement of older and disabled people in the delivery of the proposal.

7. Timeline

Outline timeline:



8. Next steps

- 8.1 Northern and the NAUG will continue preparations for the launch of the Accessibility 2020 Fund.
- 8.2 **Arrangements will be progressed to transfer funds from Arriva Rail North to the NAUG by 1 March 2020.**
- 8.3 Northern will provide updates to SYPT, TfGM and WYCA on a regular basis to provide visibility of ongoing activity and progress.