

The City Bridge Trust

Bridging Divides: Application for a grant



About your organisation

Organisation Details

Name of your organisation: South London Refugee Association	
If your organisation is part of a larger organisation, what is its name? SLRA	
In which London Borough is your organisation based? Lambeth	
Contact person: Ms Celia Sands	Position: Director
Website: http://www.slr-a.org.uk	Social Media Accounts: @SLRCharity
What Quality Marks does your organisation currently hold? Advice Quality Standard OISC Level 2	

Legal Status

Legal status of organisation: Registered Charity			
Charity Number: 1102814	Company Number: 5001950	CIC Number:	Bencom Number:
When was your organisation established? 04/01/1991			
Aims of your organisation: We aim to relieve poverty and distress by supporting refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants in South London; refugees who are outside their country of origin through fear of persecution, whether or not they have been granted asylum, and migrants who are vulnerable and at risk of destitution and homelessness and who find that their needs are not catered for through mainstream services.			

Main activities of your organisation:

Help vulnerable migrants access services and their rights.
 Help reduce the isolation experienced by vulnerable migrants.
 Help vulnerable migrants integrate into British society.

Your Staff & Volunteers

Full-time:	Part-time:	Trustee/Board members:	Active volunteers:
3	7	7	44

Do you have a Safeguarding policy? **Yes**

Are the following people in your organisation subject to DBS checks?

Paid Staff
Yes

Volunteers
Yes

Trustees / Management Committee Members
Yes

Property occupied by your organisation

Is the main property owned, leased or rented by your organisation?	If leased/rented, how long is the outstanding agreement?
Rented	?

Environmental Impact**What action have you taken in the past year to progress environmentally sustainability principles and practice?**

We are working to reduce the amount of paper we use. For example, we have moved all casework records onto an online database and we are using app based evaluation methods rather than paper forms to gather feedback.

We have partnered with 'The Bike Project' to encourage our refugee/asylum seeker volunteers to travel by bicycle to our services and elsewhere. We have ensured that staff and volunteers can store their bikes safely at our office and other venues we use.

We source food for cooking at our drop in sessions from food recycling schemes.

Finance Details

Organisation Finances

	Year of most recent audited / examined accounts	Current financial year forecast	Next financial year budget
End of financial year date	31/03/2017	31/03/2019	
Grants & donations:	£270,371	£319,267	£0
Earned income:	£0	£0	£0
Other income:	£0	£0	£0
Total income:	270,371	£319,267	£0
Charitable activity costs:	£250,828	£311,855	£0
Cost of raising funds:	£4,500	£6,500	£0
Other costs:	£0	£0	£0
Total expenditure:	£255,328	£318,355	£0
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end:	£94,451	£85,000	£0
What is your organisation's reserves policy?			
The Charity's Trustees aim is to have cash reserves to keep a minimum of three months operating costs, building to six months when funds allow, though the nature of the companies funding dictates that this will be a slow process. The Reserves Policy is reviewed annually.			
For your most recent financial year, what % of your income was from statutory sources? 1-10%			

Organisational changes

Describe any significant organisational changes to your structure, financial position or core activities since the date of your most recent accounts.

None

Grant Request

Which of the Trust's programmes and priority areas will your application deliver?
Advice and Support

Which of the programme outcome(s) does your application aim to achieve?
Advice & Support/More Londoners have improved economic circumstances
Advice & Support/More people access debt and legal services for support before they hit crisis point

Please describe the purpose of your funding request in one sentence.
To increase the capacity and expertise of our advice team in order to prevent and reduce severe poverty and destitution among vulnerable migrants.

When will the funding be required? **01/04/2019**

Is this request to continue work that is currently funded or has been funded in the last year by:

City Bridge Trust?

Another funder? (if so which)

Yes

How much funding are you requesting?

Year 1:
£40,784

Year 2:
£41,563

Year 3:
£0

Year 4:
£0

Year 5:
£0

Total Requested: £82,347

What 3 main differences or outcomes do you want to achieve through your funding proposal?

600 vulnerable people have improved economic circumstances.

280 vulnerable migrants gain confidence, knowledge and skills needed to advocate for themselves and access entitlements.

30 volunteers from migrant communities are better equipped to provide specialist advice and support

What are the main activities or outputs you will deliver to achieve these differences?

One to one individual advice/ casework sessions focusing on improving economic circumstances and preventing/reducing destitution.

Workshop sessions and one to one befriending/mentoring.

Training and supervision for volunteer advice/support team members

You and your grant request

What, specifically, are you applying for (your project)?

Our project will increase our capacity and expertise for the provision of specialist advice for migrants who are at risk of or are experiencing severe poverty, destitution and/or homelessness. We will increase our capacity and expertise in providing advice including immigration (to OISC Level 2), debt, housing and welfare benefits by further developing the role of Advice Co-ordinator to supervise a specialist team of volunteers who will support with destitution and homelessness prevention and reduction. This advice team will operate at our two weekly Drop In sessions where a range of emotional and practical support will be provided and they will undertake follow up casework with vulnerable people.

The Advice Co-ordinator will also work with staff and volunteers to develop and facilitate training for volunteers and workshops for clients which will aim to increase knowledge of rights and entitlements and to foster confidence and self-advocacy.

How will the project described achieve your stated outcomes?

We want to reduce and prevent severe poverty and destitution and homelessness among the vulnerable people we work with by:

- Improving our service offer to beneficiaries, especially devising new pathways out of destitution and increase capacity for referrals and casework (both statutory and voluntary routes)
- Strengthening our Advice team and increasing capacity and expertise at our Drop In sessions through skilled staff and volunteers
- Continuing to raise levels of skills and knowledge in our volunteer team through training and supervision
- Building evidence through data collection for advocacy and policy work
- With an increase in capacity we will increase participation in external forums and strategic partnership in the locality and across the migration sector, e.g. Frontline Providers? Network, London Destitution Forum
- Exploring the possibilities of additional new partnerships with homelessness agencies, e.g. Housing Justice, Glass Door.

How do you know there's a need for this work?

Over the last 3 years we have seen a substantial increase in the number of people accessing our services for advice and particularly those experiencing severe poverty or destitution. In 2015 6% of 287 people we supported were destitute. By 2017 this had risen to 14% of 423 people. Our gathered data shows that the severe poverty, destitution and homelessness experienced by those we work with is commonly a result of insecure immigration status and that regularizing status is often key to ending poverty and destitution.

In early 2018 we carried out a mapping of destitution advice services available to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in South London. The findings demonstrated that SLRA has an important role to play as other organisations providing services are concentrated in South East London, are struggling to cope with demand and do not provide the open access and peer support of our Drop Ins.

How will the work be delivered - specifically, what will you do?

Our Advice Manager will establish and supervise a team of volunteers to provide specialist advice in immigration, debt, housing, welfare benefits etc. and ongoing holistic casework to prevent and reduce the effects of poverty and destitution on individuals who access our service.

The advice manager will ensure the quality of advice provided and provide and supervise immigration advice at OISC Level 1/2.

The advice manager and volunteers will develop and provide regular group workshops to provide information and support on priority topics related to destitution and homelessness. Volunteers will be trained and supervised to provide one to one advice and support. Most of these volunteers will be of migrant background.

Advice, group sessions and befriending and support will be provided within our weekly drop in sessions where clients can also access specialist health advisors, employment advice, ESOL classes, hot lunches and social activities.

Why are you the right organisation to do this work?

Since 1991 SLRA has provided specialist services to refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants. We have developed strong partnerships which allow us to meet our clients complex needs.

Feedback from people who have accessed our Drop Ins for advice show a high level of trust and confidence and that we are able to reach and support marginalised people, many of whom have little or no contact with other services.

We provide the high quality, specialist advice our clients need (OISC Level 2 and AQS)

Evaluation of our advice service in 2017 includes:

39 people moved on from destitution and homelessness

107 immigration issues were resolved

91% of people surveyed after accessing advice were satisfied or very satisfied

73% said they were less anxious about practical issues they were facing after receiving advice

66% said that they felt better able to cope with problems and sort them out for themselves.

How does your work complement and not duplicate other services within your area?

In early 2018 we carried out a mapping of destitution prevention and reduction services available to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in South London with a view to better understanding need and reshaping our own service. The findings demonstrated that SLRA has a vital role to play as others providing services are concentrated in South East London and all reported struggling to cope with demand.

Our Drop In sessions are well established and we have worked to develop partnerships with local voluntary and statutory agencies, including those (St George's Hospital Refugee Health Team, Merton Education Inclusion, Breaking Barriers and Project 17) who provide services at our Drop Ins. This allows us to ensure local services complement each other and use resources effectively to meet local need.

We co-ordinate a local network group for refugee support organisations and participate actively on a range of other networks including London Destitution Network.

How will you ensure that your project will hear and represent the views and needs of disadvantaged people and/or diverse communities?

We use a range of methods to gather information about the needs of the people we work with. This includes:

- clear processes for triage and ongoing needs assessment when new clients arrive at Drop In
- co-ordination of / participation in local networks including Wandsworth Refugee Support Network
- An SLRA user participation group meets to discuss client needs and to influence our service provision.

We gather views from clients and volunteers. This includes use of feedback forms and an app based evaluation tool at Drop Ins and gathering of feedback on clients' satisfaction with advice received included in all advice giving sessions.

We represent the needs and views of the disadvantaged people we work with by feeding the data we gather into local service planning and policy groups. We also provide training and support clients to take part in local consultations.

How does your project engage and empower individuals and/or communities to come together on this issue? Will you be working with people who are particularly excluded?

We provide training and supervision to volunteers who are often former clients to provide quality peer support and advice to others. Together with our advice staff and external experts, our volunteers work to resolve practical problems such as household budgeting, debt, welfare benefits, housing. We will develop the capacity and expertise of this group of volunteers so that they are able to support others within their communities.

We use a range of methods to gather feedback from clients and use this to feed into local consultations. In the last two years 39 clients have taken part in consultations both within SLRA and those organised by local agencies including Health Watch and CAB, giving feedback on local service provision based on their lived experience.

Those we work with are particularly excluded due to many factors including irregular immigration status, severe poverty, lack of English and mental or physical health issues.

Is the focus of your project meeting an already identifiable need (acute or otherwise) or are there elements which are preventative and/or incorporate early action?

Many of the people who access our advice services do so because they have reached a crisis point. For these people need is already clearly identifiable. Our advice and support aims to lift clients in this situation out of crisis.

However, many of those who access our service present with issues relating to debt, poverty or inadequate housing which are persistent but not yet acute. In carrying out assessments with these clients we often uncover an underlying issue, most commonly an immigration irregularity, which is the root cause of current crisis or is likely to cause severe hardship or crisis in the future. For these clients early intervention with accurate, free legal advice or referral for representation, can help to avoid crisis.

The volunteer advisors and befrienders involved in this project will also be well paced to notice needs such as mental health issues and to make timely referrals.

Who might you need to work closely with in delivering this project - whether before, during or afterwards?

We will work closely with current partners to provide holistic support at our Drop In sessions. These currently include local health, education and employment advice providers. During the course of the project we hope to develop further partnerships with homelessness agencies including Housing Justice and Glass Door.

We will work closely with referral partners and with a range of local service providers in order to better meet the complex needs of many of those we work with. We have built strong links with a range of local agencies over the years and we ensure that we update our contacts and understanding of services and referral criteria.

Our aim as a funder is to help people move positively between any of the four stages of Surviving, Coping, Adapting and Thriving. For your project at which of these stages will most people begin their journey?

Many of our clients access our advice service because they are approaching crisis. Many are refused asylum seekers or people with irregular status who have lived destitute and homeless for years who have almost reached breaking point mentally and physically. Many others are people, often parents with dependent children, who are just managing to survive and for whom the risk of sinking into homelessness and destitution is always present. Our project will aim to support these people so most people involved in the project will begin their journey at the 'Surviving' stage.

Those who are involved in the project as volunteers will include people who have migrated and may have lived experience of severe poverty or destitution but who are now beginning to thrive and develop the capacity to support others while gaining knowledge and experience.

Will there be any elements of this project that will help you or your beneficiaries to reduce your environmental footprint?

We train all volunteers and staff who give advice to use our online database for recording notes including keeping scanned copies of documents on clients files. We are also testing apps to see if we can use these to capture data and all these have allowed us to reduce the amount of paper we use.

We have partnered with 'The Bike Project' to encourage our refugee/asylum seeker volunteers and clients to travel by bicycle to our services and elsewhere. We will continue to offer this as part of our advice service

We source food for cooking the hot meal we provide at our drop in sessions from food recycling schemes.

Funding required for the project

What is the total cost of the proposed activity/project?

Expenditure heading	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Advice Co-ordinator Salary	31,809	32,588	0	0	0	64,397
Volunteer Training	1,200	1,200	0	0	0	2,400
Volunteer expenses	875	875	0	0	0	1,750
Drop In venue rent	6,000	6,000	0	0	0	12,000
Management and on Costs	3,500	3,500	0	0	0	7,000
Equipment (Laptops and mobile phones)	2,000	2,000	0	0	0	4,000
TOTAL:	45,384	46,163	0	0	0	91,547

What income has already been raised?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
	0	0	0			0
TOTAL:	0	0	0	0	0	0

What other funders are currently considering the proposal?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Henry Smith Charity	3,000	3,000	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:	0	0	0	0	0	0

How much is requested from the Trust?

Expenditure heading	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Advice Co-ordinator Salary	31,809	32,588	0	0	0	64,397
Volunteer training	600	600	0	0	0	1,200
Volunteer expenses	875	875	0	0	0	1,750
Share of Drop In venue rent	3,000	3,000	0	0	0	6,000
Management and on costs	3,500	3,500	0	0	0	7,000
Equipment (Laptops and mobile phones)	1,000	1,000	0	0	0	2,000
	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:	40,784	41,563	0	0	0	82,347

Who will benefit?

How many people will directly benefit from the grant per year?

350

In which Greater London borough(s) or areas of London will your beneficiaries live?

Wandsworth

Does this project specifically target any groups or communities?

Yes - please enter details below

This project will specifically work with the following age groups:

This project will specifically work with the following gender groups:

This project will specifically work with the following ethnic groups:

Refugees and asylum seekers

If Other ethnic group, please give details:

This project will specifically work with Deaf and disabled people:

No

This project will specifically work with LGBTQI groups:

No

This project will specifically work with other groups or communities:

Migrants who are recently arrived or at risk due to insecure immigration status

How will you target the groups/communities you have identified? What is your expertise in providing services for these groups?

We have developed Drop In sessions to be accessible and appropriate for these groups. We use informal referral routes through friends and family word of mouth but also have a wide range of statutory and voluntary sector referrers to our service.

Are there any groups or communities you think your organisation will find hard to include through this project?

No

If yes, please specify which groups or communities? Where possible using the categories listed above.

If yes, what steps will you take to make your services accessible to and meet the needs of the groups/communities you have identified?

Declaration

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, all the information I have provided in this application form is correct. I fully understand that City Bridge Trust has zero tolerance towards fraud and will seek to prosecute and recover funds in every instance.

Please confirm: Yes Full Name: **Cella Sands**

Role within Organisation: **Director**