

**MEETING: 31/01/2019**

**Ref: 14902**

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Connecting the Capital**

**Akademi South Asian Dance UK**

**Adv: Gilly Green**

**Base: Camden**

**Amount requested: £105,000**

**Benefit: London-wide**

**Amount recommended: £105,000**

**The Applicant**

Akademi, a registered charity, aims to inspire audiences and change lives by creating and nurturing excellence in classical, popular and participatory South Asian dance. Rooted in the local community in Camden, it presents quality performances in a range of high profile traditional and non-traditional settings, develops artists through tailored programmes of support and delivers workshops in the community with a current focus on older adults, hospital patients and children and young people with special educational needs. Last year it ran 339 workshops reaching 7,500 participants.

**The Application**

Akademi is seeking to build on the success of 'Dance Well' - a participatory and performance programme to improve the health and well-being of the older population through the medium of South Asian dance. Designed in conjunction with healthcare professionals and delivered by professional dance artists, this specialised programme of workshops is delivered in community and hospital settings offering stimulating, exercise-based dance activities to older people with long term health needs, including those who are socially isolated. Now in its third year of funding from Big Lottery Fund, the project works with Clinical Commissioning Groups, health and adult social care services and older people's organisations to target hard to reach participants. As the 3-year grant from Big Lottery Fund comes to an end, Akademi is seeking part funding for salary costs of the project manager, a contribution to artist and project costs to take it to its next stage of development. It is also seeking continuation funding from Big Lottery Fund.

**The Recommendation**

Akademi has successfully taken Asian dance into a wide range of generic community and health-based settings, including eight London hospitals. It has been well received by people from many communities and is highly inclusive – for example it works with occupational and physiotherapists in hospitals, delivering to people on dementia wards and where needed brings dance to bedsides. Following recent research (soon to be published) which shows the benefits of the approach, the organisation has a clear strategic vision to embed the programme into social prescribing with local health commissioning. Akademi is a forward-looking organisation that punches above its weight. Supporting the project may provide useful leverage for continuation funding from the Big Lottery Fund – the indications for which appear positive. Funding is recommended as follows:

***£105,000 over three years (3 x £35,000) as a contribution towards the Dance Well project manager, dance artists and associated project running costs. The grant is conditional upon receipt of an organisational budget for 2019/20 before releasing the first payment.***

## Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
23/09/2015	£2,000 to match CEP funding towards the wage costs of a Community Arts Apprentice for 1 year. The national minimum wage must be paid.
28/01/2015	£2,000 to match CEP funding towards the wage costs of 1 Apprentice for 1 year. The national minimum wage must be paid, and the organisation must be the direct employer.
09/05/2013	Declined as project did not meet priorities.

## Background and detail of proposal

Akademi offers the specific nuances of Asian dance encompassing mudras or hand gestures to maintain articulation of joints, particularly fingers, wrists and ankles which may be difficult or painful for older people. It can also be very helpful for rehab for those with pulmonary/cardiac conditions. Workshops incorporate rhythms from South Asian dance styles, enhancing co-ordination and cognitive function, whilst bringing social connections and fun. Last year saw 80 dance and movement workshops with more than 200 older adults signing up to 8-week courses, as well as over 4000 short term and one-off participants. In April 2018 Akademi was awarded ethical approval to carry out a research project with the Royal Brompton and Harefield Hospital NHS Foundation Trust to collect physiological and psychological data pre and post dance interventions. Although not yet formally published, the research will show strong health and social benefits to participants, and the hospital consultants involved are strong advocates for the approach. There is considerable learning from the last 3 years and the programme has been modified to reflect feedback. With emerging opportunities in health and wellbeing settings, including around dementia, Akademi is well placed to respond to these current high-profile agendas and explore a range of funding and delivery models which will put it on a sustainable footing for the future.

## Financial Information

Akademi receives core unrestricted funding from the Arts Council and is in year 1 of a 4-year National Portfolio Organisation grant until 2022. This represents approximately 30% of its total turnover and brings some stability. Over the last year it has seen growth in earned income in line with its business plan and has a good range of funding sources including from Trusts and Foundations. Free reserves at the year-end 2018 are slightly higher than target but are budgeted to reduce to target level in 2019. Designated funds of just over £70,000 are not included in free reserves as they have been set aside for specific projects but could be undesignated if required. The deficit shown in the 2018 column was to reduce existing restricted and designated funds.

**Year end as at 31 MARCH**

	<b>2017 Examined Accounts £</b>	<b>2018 Examined accounts £</b>	<b>2019 Forecast £</b>
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	455,761	640,168	636,037
- % of Income confirmed as at 18/10/18	n/a	100%	68%
Expenditure	(443,116)	(705,607)	(635,400)
<b>Total surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>12,645</b>	<b>(65,439)</b>	<b>637</b>
<b>Split between:</b>			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	43,404	(41,260)	52,717
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(30,759)	(24,179)	(52,080)
	<b>12,645</b>	<b>(65,439)</b>	<b>637</b>
<b>Cost of Raising Funds</b>	<b>35,335</b>	<b>38,395</b>	<b>35,000</b>
- % of Income	7.8%	6.0%	5.5%
<b>Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)</b>	<b>287,938</b>	<b>407,463</b>	<b>445,020</b>
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
<b>Free unrestricted reserves held at year end</b>	<b>199,585</b>	<b>200,709</b>	<b>148,629</b>
No of months of operating expenditure	8.3	5.9	4.0
<b>Reserves policy target</b>	<b>178,186</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>
No of months of operating expenditure	7.4	4.4	4.0
<b>Free reserves over/(under) target</b>	<b>21,399</b>	<b>50,709</b>	<b>(1,371)</b>

