

MEETING: 31/01/2019

Ref: 14895

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Connecting the Capital

HEAR Equality and Human Rights Network

Adv: Claran Rafferty

Base: Islington

Amount requested: £194,144

Benefit: London-wide

Amount recommended: £194,000

The Applicant

HEAR Equality and Human Rights Network (HEAR), now a registered CIO in its own right, is the lead body of a cross-sectoral collaboration comprising a range of voluntary, public sector and private sector organisations. It is a pan-equalities and human rights network connecting and supporting equalities organisations across all equality characteristics to get their voices heard and influence policy. HEAR is underpinned by the belief that those who have direct experience of inequality and discrimination are best placed to develop strategies to achieve equality. With one full-time and one part-time member of staff, HEAR has a reputation for punching above its weight – its network has over 600 members, voluntary organisations and community groups that work in London for equality and human rights, across all 'protected characteristics'. It has been active in The Way Ahead and the Equalities Sub-Group. HEAR currently holds a CBT Cornerstone Fund development grant.

The Application

This application is for a Network Co-ordinator post and related costs to enable the organisation to continue and to develop its work in giving voice to equality-focused organisations across London. HEAR works on issues that are pan-equality and intersectional, where the VCS working together can reduce discrimination and improve access to services, support and policy-making. Its membership includes organisations which are large (eg Age UK London) and those that are very small and/or including those in the sector who are considered "experts by experience". Its work creates opportunities for people from different specialist areas to meet and to share approaches to issues which impinge on those most disadvantaged in society.

The Recommendation

HEAR's focus on inter-sectional issues is very important in today's climate where many people and communities are considered to be disadvantaged through more than one circumstance (an unsophisticated example of this might be an older LGBT person who has been subjected to hate crime). Its strengths as an organisation in helping to inform policy and practice can be seen in its involvement in the development of the London Plan, for example. Current work includes area of mental health equality; disabled asylum seekers and refugees; and LGBTQI and diversity. HEAR does not campaign for its members, rather it helps them do it for themselves. It also acts as a valuable forum for exchange for research, information and case studies. A grant is recommended:

£194,000 over five years (£50,000; £42,000; £34,000; £34,000; £34,000) towards the salary of a f/t HEAR Network Co-ordinator and running costs of work to develop and support the membership.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
07/09/2018	£20,000 towards the salary costs of HEAR and four of the collaborating organisations, together with the associated running costs of a project to test the use of innovative, accessible digital means to enable equality-focussed grassroots organisations to make connections across the voluntary, public and private sectors.
14/03/2018	£25,000 towards the salary of a Network Co-ordinator to enable HEAR's continued active involvement with The Way Ahead.
11/05/2017	£50,000 over one year for the co-ordinator's salary, on-costs and operational costs.

Background and detail of proposal

Although HEAR only registered as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) in mid-2016 it has been operating since 2004, being hosted within an established charity (Refugees in Effective and Active Partnership). Although its trustee board is quite small at present (membership is expected to increase at its AGM in January 2019) it has a large and active steering group. It is currently funded by Trust for London for its policy and campaigns work (NB none of its work is political campaigning). This proposal, should you fund it, will greatly enhance the organisation's ability to capture and support the voice of its many members and to enable them, individually, make their voices heard. The postholder will enable members to become more inclusive, to build links with each other and to network more effectively. It is an important organisation by dint of being the only pan-London, pan-equality, intersectional network and will play an important part in ensuring the voice of those multiply-disadvantaged is heard and considered.

Financial Information

The charity became independent in August 2016 hence its first full-year accounts are for the period 2017/18 (and why the table below holds no financial information prior to that year). These accounts are currently draft but are due to be signed off at the AGM in late January 2019. Prior to this HEAR was hosted by another organisation (see above) whose accounts show restricted income of £54,748 and equivalent expenditure for its activities. In the table below the budget for 2018/19 includes funding applications to the value of £120,000 currently in the pipeline and which are likely to have a decision this financial year. These applications have a good chance of success although little if any expenditure against this income is unlikely this financial year, hence the projected surplus on restricted funds at the year end.

Year end as at 31 March	2018 Draft £	2019 Budget £
Income & expenditure:		
Income	93,071	211,750
- % of Income confirmed as at 1 Dec 2018	100%	43%
Expenditure	(57,375)	(88,831)
Total surplus/(deficit)	35,696	122,919
Split between:		
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	30,752	107,669
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	4,944	15,250
	35,696	122,919
Cost of Raising Funds	1,831	1,831
- % of income	2.0%	0.9%
Total expenditure	57,375	88,831
Free unrestricted reserves:		
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	4,944	20,194
No of months of expenditure	1.0	2.7
Reserves policy target	14,343	22,208
No of months of expenditure	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(9,399)	(2,014)

