

Combined Education Charity - Application Extracts & Assessment Report

Birkbeck, University of London - Application

Detail of the Proposal

In 1823, Dr George Birkbeck founded the London Mechanics' Institute, today Birkbeck, University of London. Dr Birkbeck set out a radical vision to educate working people of London. Nearly 200 years later, Birkbeck holds true to its founding principles of accessibility and academic excellence for the public benefit.

Birkbeck established Foundation Years (FY) in Cultural Arts, Science and Technology to give non-traditional students a second chance at education. Though FY courses have increased in attendance each year, more than 60% of students forego progression to undergraduate study due to financial insecurity. We have identified a need to provide FY students with financial assistance.

We would be delighted if the Charity would support our FY students through the provision of eight bursaries (£3,000 each) for eight FY students over two years. These bursaries will empower excellent students to continue in education and enable them to pay for necessary study expenses like travel, equipment, material and maintenance costs.

These bursaries will help us to achieve the following key outcomes: recruitment of non-traditional students to higher education, retention of students with the potential to succeed, increased diversity in Cultural Arts, Science and Technology sectors and improved student experience through alleviation of financial stress.

Detailed Breakdown of Budget

Birkbeck will provide £24,000, equivalent to eight £3,000 bursaries, to eight different students. The bursary recipients will be able to use this funding toward school materials and other maintenance costs, including books, travel and childcare.

Relevant FY course directors will nominate students for these bursary awards based on the following criteria: overall academic performance; academic improvement; and commitment to the programme, including attendance and class participation. To be eligible for these awards, students must be progressing from their FY in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 to their undergraduate degrees.

A panel of academic and professional services will determine the eight students who will receive these awards. The College will distribute bursaries (£3,000 each) to four students in June 2020 and again to four further students in June 2021.

The bursary offering will be available to all FY students at Birkbeck. In order to make the selection process as fair and open as possible, the bursary scheme is not designed to target specific ethnicity groupings or persons with disabilities. Given the College's commitment to opening education to students from widening participation backgrounds, our proactive outreach work throughout London boroughs and our already diverse student body, it is likely that our beneficiaries will come from equally diverse backgrounds.

Educational Benefit:

Birkbeck established FY courses to further open up higher education to students of all backgrounds. FY courses are one-year programmes designed to prepare students who do not yet have the required qualification level for an undergraduate degree or for students who want to ease into study. FY courses offer a second chance for students who have the greatest potential for transformation through education and who often have the highest ambition to excel in their studies. We support these students through targeted academic

training, personalised tutoring and careers guidance.

In FY courses, students will take modules at Level 3 or Level 4 to prepare for university study. Upon successful completion of the FY, students will automatically progress onto a 3-year, full-time evening study BA/BSc/LLB degree. These courses will help build students' confidence and give them the core knowledge and key academic skills they need at university. Through targeted coursework and trainings, students will improve their essay-writing and coursework skills, develop their IT and library skills and give them a taste of the subject area that most interests them.

The demand for FY courses is growing. In the 2018-2019 academic year, more than 80 students began a FY with us, an increase of 47% from the previous academic year. There are currently 291 new and continuing students doing degrees with FY at Birkbeck, and we expect more than 80 students to begin their FY with us in 2019-2020.

We now offer the following FY courses: BA Arts & Humanities; BSc Business; BSc Computing; BSc Economics; BSc Information Systems & Management; BSc Mathematics; LLB Law; BSc Biomedicine; and BSc Psychology. Through these offerings in Cultural Arts, Science and Technology, we inspire people to pursue university study and empower these students to make such industries more diverse.

We have identified a key need for financial support for students who progress from FY courses to undergraduate studies. Despite the increase in student numbers on FY courses, more than 60% of students forego undergraduate studies after the completion of their FY. College leadership investigated the reasons for student dropout and found that FY students were most likely to give up university study owing to financial worry and aversion to debt.

Students are significantly less likely to drop out when they receive financial support. We already help our students by concentrating on challenges present within our students' lives: childcare, mental health, disability, dyslexia and financial worry. We provide extra academic support, mental health counselling, careers training and financial support when possible. However, we believe that bursaries for FY students will make an immense difference to these students and empower them to progress to their undergraduate studies.

The provision of bursaries for FY students is a new project for Birkbeck. FY students often do not have the confidence or knowledge to apply to other funding sources, so the distribution of £3,000 bursaries will give these students the self-assurance and financial security necessary to tackle their next years of undergraduate study. These bursaries will allow students to pay for study materials and costs, including books, travel and childcare, and in turn improve their student experiences.

We would be delighted if the Charity were to support eight student bursaries over the next two years. Though the bursaries programme is new at Birkbeck, we are confident that the programme will be successful in attracting and retaining excellent students. We will follow students to track their academic performance, monitor and evaluate the impact of bursaries on bursary recipients and report our findings to the Charity. Based on the programme's success, we will then seek to scale up the number of bursaries available for FY students.

CENTRAL GRANTS PROGRAMME

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: e) Combined Education Charity

Birkbeck, University of London (ref. 15441)

Amount requested: £24,000

Amount recommended: £24,000

Purpose of grant request: Financial assistance, in the form of bursaries, for students progressing from their Foundation Year courses to undergraduate studies at Birkbeck University.

The Applicant

Birkbeck, University of London (formally Birkbeck College), is a public research university located in Bloomsbury, London, and a constituent college of the federal University of London. Established in 1823 as the London Mechanics' Institute by its founder, Sir George Birkbeck, and its supporters, Jeremy Bentham, J. C. Hobhouse and Henry Brougham, Birkbeck has been one of the few institutions to specialise in evening higher education.

Background and detail of proposal

Birkbeck has a strong tradition of helping people to access higher education, especially underrepresented groups, such as students with non-traditional qualifications, students with negative educational experiences and students lacking strong support networks. Birkbeck does not define its applicants based on their prior academic records and takes a more rounded view considering each application on the merit of the individual. As a result of this holistic approach to education, Birkbeck is very accessible: more than 60% of its undergraduate students come from low-income backgrounds, 16% of its students have declared a disability and more than 40% are from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds. These numbers are much higher than across other UK universities where 25% of UK domiciled students come from BME backgrounds and 12% have declared a disability.

Birkbeck established Foundation Years (FY) in Cultural Arts, Science and Technology to give non-traditional students a second chance at education. Though FY courses have increased in attendance each year, more than 60% of students forego progression to undergraduate study due to financial insecurity. Funding is sought to support FY students through the provision of eight bursaries (£3,000 each) for eight FY students over two years. These bursaries will empower excellent students to continue in education and enable them to pay for necessary study expenses like travel, equipment, material and maintenance costs. Birkbeck would act as bursar for these grants and has a clear assessment framework for awarding bursaries. Birkbeck hope these bursaries will help to achieve the following key outcomes: recruitment of non-traditional students to higher education, retention of students with the potential to succeed, increased diversity in Cultural Arts, Science and Technology sectors and improved student experience through alleviation of financial stress.

As this is the first time the University have offered these bursaries, they will monitor the success closely and track the educational attainment of the applicants. It is hoped that if this scheme is a success, they will look for funding from other foundations to increase its remit.

Financial Information

Birkbeck University has a large turnover and holds reserves to cover its assets. The amount of monies held in reserve by the University far exceeds that of this project. It is deemed that the university is financially viable for the duration of this project.

Year end as at 31st July	2018	2019	2020
	Signed Accounts	Draft Accounts	Forecast
	£	£	£
Income & expenditure:			
Income	108,984,000	100,650,000	105,975,000
Expenditure	(106,155,000)	(106,150,000)	(108,975,000)
Total surplus/(deficit)	2,829,000	(5,500,000)	(3,000,000)
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	1,362,000	(5,500,000)	(3,000,000)
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	1,467,000	0	0
	2,829,000	(5,500,000)	(3,000,000)
Total expenditure	106,155,000	108,975,000	108,975,000
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	10,283,000	10,283,000	10,283,000
No of months of operating expenditure	1.2	1.1	1.1

Recommendation

Birkbeck is a long-established educational institution that has pioneered and approach of offering inclusive higher education. This project will provide valuable financial support to individuals studying foundation year at Birkbeck who are looking to progress into a higher education course. This bursary programme meets the objects of the Combined Education Charity as it will further the education of persons attending higher Educational Institutions by the provision of financial assistance. The grant meets the policy as they will specifically target those looking to study topics in the Cultural Arts, Science and Technology. As Birkbeck will be distributing grants to individuals they can also demonstrate how the individuals that are successful are likely to have limited access to other funds to aid their study. Funding is recommended as follows:

£24,000 over two years (£12,000; £12,000) to provide financial assistance, in the form of bursaries, for students progressing from their Foundation Year courses to undergraduate studies at Birkbeck University.

London South Teaching School Alliance (Charles Dickens Primary School) – Application

Detail of Proposal

Many pupils in London schools experience deprivation and there is a close link between deprivation at home and impoverished language use, which limits learning. This project will enable 20 teachers from 10 London schools to benefit from professional development supported by academics from the University of Cambridge which will improve the quality of classroom talk in their classrooms and hence raise the attainment of pupils in their care. Teachers will attend six half day sessions in which they will be supported to benchmark the quality of talk in their own classroom, to engage with what is known from research about best practice in classroom 'talk moves' and the creation of a supportive climate for dialogic talk. They will then make changes to their own practice and measure the impact of this on pupils in their care, with a focus on pupils from deprived backgrounds. They will also present their findings to a wider group of schools so that this good practice is shared across local schools.

The project will use the University of Cambridge Teacher Scheme for Educational Dialogue Analysis (T-SEDA), a practical tool kit to support teachers in engaging with enquiry projects around dialogic teaching in their classrooms.

Detailed Budget

Six half day sessions led by Director @ £400 per day = £1,200.00

10 schools, teachers attending in pairs, six half days' supply cover 50% covered @ £180 per day = £5,400.00

Design, collection, analysis of baseline-impact data, report writing TSA Programme Manager 2 days @ £300 per day = £600.00

Refreshments £3 per half day per person, 6 half days = £360.00

University of Cambridge support 2 days @ £550 per day = £1,100.00

Report printing = £40.00

Project management: TSA Programme Manager @ £300 per day, 3 days = £900

Project administration: TSA Administrator at £200 per day, 2 days = £400

Total = £10,000

Educational Benefit:

Teachers to develop an improved understanding of research approaches to professional learning that can support improved teaching and learning e.g designing a research question, gathering baseline and impact data, reviewing the literature, designing a relevant change to practice. The T-SEDA pack provided by the University of Cambridge provides tools to support teachers in constructing their own classroom research including coding transcripts of classroom dialogue and managing the enquiry cycle. Sessions will support them to apply this learning to their own context and to jointly problem solve any challenges that arise as they conduct their research.

Produce a report that can be shared with other London schools and run a free event for schools at which some of the teachers on the project can showcase their findings. The project would also seek to deploy some of the strongest teachers on the project as Lead Practitioners or Specialist Leaders in Education once the project has ended. All these activities are designed to ensure the project has a legacy and an impact on schools beyond the participating group.

We would want teachers to be able to present evidence of improved progress for pupils in their classes due to improved classroom talk. This could be seen in academic progress but also soft skills that enable learning, e.g engagement, motivation, confidence. We would want

teachers to state that they feel more confident and to have a wider range of strategies for enabling effective classroom talk that supports learning.

The outcomes we would seek from the project would include changes not only within the individual teachers' classrooms, but at whole school level. We would encourage participants to present their findings to the school and/or to support other teachers as the project unfolds. We would want teachers to explain how and with what degree of success they are enabling these new good practices to be used by staff across the school.

CENTRAL GRANTS PROGRAMME

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: e) Combined Education Charity

London South Teaching School Alliance, Charles Dickens Primary School (ref. 15438)

Amount requested: £10,000

Amount recommended: £10,000

Purpose of grant request: Talk Matters: A research project for 20 teachers from 10 London schools to ensure effective classroom talk for better learning and teaching.

The Applicant

London South Teaching School Alliance (LSTSA), formerly Southwark Teaching School Alliance, was established in January 2015. The alliance brings together schools and selected partners committed to working together to achieve its vision: an education system where children and young people are nurtured and challenged to flourish in all aspects of their life, academic, cultural, personal and social. LSTSA is based at the Charles Dickens Primary School in Southwark. Charles Dickens Primary School leads the LSTSA, a hub for the professional development of educators.

Background and detail of proposal

This project will enable 20 teachers from 10 London schools in the LSTSA network to engage in a training programme to improve and develop oracy – the ability to express oneself fluently and grammatically in speech - in the classroom. Working with academics from the University of Cambridge, the teachers involved in the scheme will learn about dialogic teaching methods and how to implement them into everyday lessons. The programme will take place over a full year with the recruitment of participants taking place in September. Over the course of the year the teachers will attend six half day sessions in which they will be supported to benchmark the creation of a supportive climate for dialogic talk in the classroom. Each session will help the teachers to inform their practice and trial and implement new methods in the classroom. The Teachers will have access to journal and articles and will be tasked with analysing the impact of the implementation. Academics from Cambridge University will work closely with teachers and have devised a bench marking and coding process to run alongside the programme, to measure success.

Each school involved will put forward two teachers to take part in the programme. Greater success will be achieved this way as there will be peer-support amongst teachers involved. The programme is also designed to ensure that the practice can be adopted across as school, which is more likely to succeed if more than one person is leading and initiating the new approach.

Financial Information

For the purposes of assessment, the accounts of Charles Dickens Primary School have been analysed as they are the legal entity that will manage the budget. The school is deemed as outstanding by Ofsted and has 100% of its funding confirmed for the 2019/2020 school year, therefore no financial risk posed by offering this grant.

Year end as at 31st July	2018	2019	2020
	Signed Accounts	Draft Accounts	Forecast
	£	£	£
Income & expenditure:			
Income	2,965,461	3,106,115	3,137,829
- % of Income confirmed as at 10/06/2019	N/A	100%	100%
Expenditure	(2,961,154)	(3,009,356)	(3,118,859)
Total surplus/(deficit)	4,307	96,759	18,970
Split between:			
Total expenditure	2,963,224	3,009,356	3,118,859
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	(8,120)	88,639	107,609
No of months of operating expenditure	0.0	0.4	0.4

Recommendation

This application clearly meets the objects of the Combined Education Charity as it will provide a grant for staff at a maintained schools and academies in London to undertake study that will further their development as teachers. At assessment it was clear that this was a well thought through application that will have a benefit for the teachers and schools involved in the scheme as well as the pupils attending the schools involved. Funding is recommended as follows:

£10,000 over 12 months to cover the costs of a research project for 20 teachers from 10 London schools implement effective classroom talk for better learning and teaching.