

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

**Crafts Council**

**Adv: Samantha Grimmett-Batt  
Base: Islington  
Benefit: London-wide**

**Amount requested: £99,626  
{Revised request: £100,000}**

**Amount recommended: £100,000**

**The Applicant**

The Crafts Council (TCC), a registered charity, was formed in 1971 as an advisory committee under the Design Council. In 1982 it was granted a Royal Charter and became independent. It is responsible for advancing craft in the UK and aims to champion new makers, empower new making, and inspire new audiences. It is committed to improving the world through craft, ensuring that the "creative act of making" is open to everyone, and acting as a platform within which individuals and enterprises can develop and thrive.

**The Application**

TCC is seeking a grant towards the access elements of the refurbishment of the listed building in Islington where it has been resident since 1991. The current lease ends in 2040. Currently, the Craft Council's collection is only viewable at temporary or travelling exhibitions around the country, but it aims, with this project, to create a permanent London exhibition. The work will create a free, welcoming, centrally located public space where visitors can view and explore the constantly changing displays. There will also be a varied timetable of participatory events throughout the year. Of the £747,667 total cost, £397,000 has been raised so far, with an additional (up to) £275,000 of self-funding available. Planning permission has been received and works are due to start this August.

**The Recommendation**

TCC has established the need for the wider project via consultation with its own audience and the local community and has verified the access requirements via an access audit. It is well placed, close to Angel tube station, and has good links with local voluntary and community sector organisations such as Claremont Project (grant recipient under your Investing in Londoners programme), which works with older people and is based behind TCC's building. Funding is recommended:

***£100,000 towards accessibility works at the Crafts Council premises in Pentonville Road, Islington.***

**Funding History**

None

**Background and detail of proposal**

From 1991 TCC maintained a reference library, shop, café and gallery space. In 2006 the facility was shut to the public in order to focus on developing a better regional offering, a project which was successful. The Crafts Council now believes the time is right to re-establish a public space for its work and wishes to completely renovate the ground floor of its building, which has been used as office and storage space. The top floor is sub-let to generate income. Staff have moved to a

neighbouring building, connected by a link corridor. The aim of the work is to create an accessible space to enable participation in craft and making for all members of society. In a recent audience feedback survey 39% of respondents' self-reported as being Deaf or having a disability and the organisation wants to ensure that their new public offering is completely open to this demographic as well as other groups who have traditionally faced barriers to participation in craft. The grant recommendation reflects a new budget, attached as an appendix, based on tendered costs (the previous budget having been calculated using quantity surveyor estimates). The superstructure work involves completely replacing the current entryway with new stairs, ramps and power assisted doors. The fittings and furnishings relate to accessible signage, and the services include fitting a new unisex wheelchair-accessible toilet, and an induction loop and accessible door entry system in the entryway and reception area.

### Financial Information

Primary income comprises four years of Arts Council England (ACE) funding beginning in 2018. TCC has been funded since its inception by ACE and, following the current grant, it is unlikely that ACE would cease funding without a suitable tapering period. In 2016/17, the unrestricted reserves were strategically invested to generate longer term revenue via sub-letting the top floor of the building. The policy is to rebuild free reserves from 2017/18 onwards, however there is a forecasted planned deficit in 2019/20 due to funds being received in the preceding financial year. Following this, the charity will resume rebuilding the reserves.

The fundraising strategy includes self-funding to a maximum of £275,000, using savings derived from negotiated rent reductions.

Year end as at 31st March	2018 Signed Accounts	2019 Budget	2020 Forecast
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	4,168,000	4,275,000	3,920,000
- % of income confirmed as at 05/06/2019	N/A	N/A	64%
Expenditure	(3,982,000)	(3,735,000)	(4,171,000)
Total surplus/(deficit)	186,000	540,000	(251,000)
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(49,000)	150,000	13,000
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	235,000	390,000	(264,000)
	186,000	540,000	(251,000)
Cost of Raising Funds	571,000	69,000	67,000
- % of income	13.7%	1.6%	1.7%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	3,760,000	3,622,000	4,058,000
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	157,000	547,000	283,000
No of months of operating expenditure	0.5	1.8	0.8
Reserves policy target	940,000	905,500	1,014,500
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(783,000)	(358,500)	(731,500)