

The City Bridge Trust

Bridging Divides: Application for a grant



About your organisation

Organisation Details

Name of your organisation: British Refugee Council	
If your organisation is part of a larger organisation, what is its name? Not applicable.	
In which London Borough is your organisation based? Newham	
Contact person: Ms Ruby McDougall	Position: Trust and Statutory Officer
Website: http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk	Social Media Accounts: @refugeecouncil and https://www.facebook.com/refugeecouncil
What Quality Marks does your organisation currently hold? Investing in Volunteers Award	

Legal Status

Legal status of organisation: Registered Charity			
Charity Number: 1014576	Company Number: 2727514	CIC Number: N/A	Bencom Number: N/A
When was your organisation established? 01/01/1951			
Aims of your organisation: British Refugee Council is one of the leading national charities supporting refugees and asylum-seekers in the UK. The aims of the Refugee Council are: - For those seeking asylum, we want fair and just decision making; - For those granted refuge, we want equality of opportunity to lead fulfilling lives; - For those denied protection, we want understanding and humane treatment; - For all refugees in the UK, we want respect and dignity. Our mission is 'to be an influential and effective advocate of refugee-protection rights' so that the United Kingdom is genuinely 'a welcoming place of safety for people who seek refuge from persecution and human-rights abuses abroad'.			

Main activities of your organisation:

Established 68 years ago, the Refugee Council has remained a principled champion of a fair and humane asylum system. We deliver wide-ranging and holistic services supporting asylum seekers and refugees across England. We provide the secretariat support for the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Refugees and our Chief Executive, Maurice Wren, Co-Chairs the Strategic Engagement Group (the main stakeholder group on asylum at the Home Office) and is the Chair of UK Refugee Week. In 2017/18:

- 1) Integration Services helped 901 adults with advice and support around welfare, employment and housing.
- 2) Children's Services helped 4,050 unaccompanied minors with their asylum claim, educational classes, social evenings, help for those whose ages were disputed and trafficking projects.
- 3) Therapeutic Services helped 729 people (including 260 children) through group and individual counselling.

Your Staff & Volunteers

Full-time:	Part-time:	Trustee/Board members:	Active volunteers:
135	70	12	300

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 No
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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?
Leased	05/04/2022

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

Over the past year we have not made any significant changes towards addressing environmental issues however the organisation continuously strives to minimise overheads and resources to be as environmentally friendly as possible. This includes by:

- Migrating our ICT services into 'the cloud'
- Reusing ICT equipment and components where possible.
- Providing recycling bins in our offices
- Removing redundant ICT equipment and disposing of it in ways that encourage its reuse.
- Configuring printers to power down into standby mode when not in use.

Finance Details

Organisation Finances

	Year of most recent audited / examined accounts	Current financial year forecast	Next financial year budget
End of financial year date	31/03/2018	31/03/2019	31/03/2020
Grants & donations:	£3,077,000	£7,998,502	£9,924,185
Earned income:	£5,092,000	£397,257	£416,362
Other income:	£381,000	£3,060	£2,520
Total income:	8,550,000	£8,398,819	£10,343,067
Charitable activity costs:	£6,505,000	£8,776,308	£9,829,643
Cost of raising funds:	£1,364,000	£1,513,609	£1,335,814
Other costs:	£1,091,000	£179,713	£74,356
Total expenditure:	£8,960,000	£10,469,630	£11,239,813
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end:	£3,331,000	£2,494,000	£2,180,000

What is your organisation's reserves policy?

The Trustees regularly assess risks to which Refugee Council is exposed, and determine a range for reserve levels in light of these risks. The principal risks include the requirement for unexpected additional expenditure, a sudden unexpected change in the level of our income, and a need to maintain services in the short term and allow a wind down in a phased manner. After considering these risks and bearing in mind the uncertainty around the impact of Brexit at the date of this report the Trustees believe the current appropriate level for free reserves is between £2.0 million and £3.0 million.

For your most recent financial year, what % of your income was from statutory sources?
51-60%

Organisational changes

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

There have not been any significant changes to our structure or core activities. Our financial position remains stable and we expect the year to March 2019 to result in line with the 2018 figures. The budget for the 2019/20 year is currently forecasting a deficit but this is a deficit that includes transfers that will be brought forward.

Grant Request

Which of the Trust's programmes and priority areas will your application deliver? Positive Transitions/Migrants & refugees				
Which of the programme outcome(s) does your application aim to achieve?				
Please describe the purpose of your funding request in one sentence. The Refugee Council's Therapeutic Services in London help hundreds of refugees and people seeking asylum to cope with, and recover from, their complex mental health issues.				
When will the funding be required? 01/06/2019				
Is this request to continue work that is currently funded or has been funded in the last year by:				
City Bridge Trust? Yes		Another funder? (if so which) Comic Relief		
How much funding are you requesting?				
Year 1: £39,012	Year 2: £40,182	Year 3: £0	Year 4: £0	Year 5: £0
Total Requested: £79,193				

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

1. 70 asylum seekers and refugees per year will have improved mental and physical well-being (140 over two years)
2. 70 asylum seekers and refugees per year will have an Improved ability to make Informed choices on issues that affect their well-being (Health, Practical, Social) (140 over two years)

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

Individual counselling sessions: Each person can access up to 12 Individual therapeutic counselling sessions. These provide help to reduce distress, psycho-education to help people understand their symptoms, and practical support to reduce anxiety. We meet clients at Initial Accommodation centres or at our service delivery hub in Stratford.
Group sessions: Clients have the opportunity to meet others with shared experiences and provide peer-to-peer support. Group sessions include a weekly Mother and Toddler group for asylum seeking women to break severe social isolation, and a creative focus group where women can take part in creative activities to explore emotions.

You and your grant request

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

We are seeking £79,193 over two years from the City Bridge Trust towards the cost of one full-time Psychological Therapist in our London-based Therapeutic Services.

The Psychological Therapist provides holistic assessments and one-to-one counselling at our service delivery hub in Stratford and in Home Office Initial Accommodation (temporary accommodation centres for asylum seekers), as well as a weekly creative focus group for women in Stratford. The post-holder will work directly with 60 clients per year or 120 clients over two years.

The Psychological Therapist works in the context of our wider London-based Therapeutic Service team offering culturally sensitive, early intervention therapeutic support to asylum seekers and refugees. In addition to the work carried out by the post-holder, the service offers a weekly volunteer-led Mother and Toddler group, as well as a therapeutic programme specifically targeting newly recognised refugees (funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund).

How will the project described achieve your stated outcomes?

Improved mental health: Through contextualising experiences, clients begin to process loss, guilt and shame. Psycho-education helps them learn that what they have experienced is not their fault, and that symptoms such as anxiety and panic attacks are normal reactions to past experiences. Therapeutic tools such as mindfulness help our clients to self-regulate and reduce distress. When our clients recognise themselves as survivors of adversity, they can harness this strength when facing new challenges.

Making informed choices: Asylum seekers must survive on around £37 a week, some have poor English language skills and many lack understanding of their rights and entitlements. They live in insecure housing and must navigate the complex asylum system alone. These practical issues cause great stress and anxiety. To address this we provide practical casework to increase our clients' knowledge about their rights and entitlements. This includes help accessing a solicitor or signposting to a women's refuge.

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

The need for this service has been established through the Refugee Council's extensive and far-reaching support services for refugees and asylum seekers over the past six decades. Every year we provide direct services to over 8,000 asylum seekers and refugees across England and have witnessed how, if left untreated, profound mental health issues can impair a person's ability to engage with our services whether casework to access the welfare or employment programmes.

Experiencing violence and persecution either in their home countries, on long journeys to the UK, or once here in the UK can have long-lasting negative consequences on asylum-seekers' mental and physical health. Just last year, thanks to the support from City Bridge Trust, we supported 112 people seeking asylum in London, and of these:

- ? 70 people reported anxiety
- ? 66 people suffered from depression
- ? 38 people suffered PTSD
- ? 24 reported feeling suicidal

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

We have developed a unique model of psycho-therapeutic support that is sensitive to the complex needs of refugees and asylum seekers. We provide a short-term, early intervention service that over the course of 12 one-to-one counselling sessions helps to stabilise clients' emotional and psychological wellbeing while building their resilience. Narrative therapy is complemented by practical casework in recognition of the significant practical challenges which undermine our clients' psychological wellbeing e.g. difficulties accessing welfare and stable housing. Clients can participate in psycho-education groups to access peer support and learn practical coping mechanisms such as mindfulness to manage anxiety. We support clients at our Stratford hub and in Home Office Initial Accommodation (IA) in South London. IAs are temporary accommodation centres for asylum seekers without independent financial means. Outreach at IA offers a unique route to clients early during their time in the UK during a particularly vulnerable period.

Why are you the right organisation to do this work?

The Refugee Council has provided specialist therapeutic support to refugees in England for over 18 years, and last year these services directly supported over 400 adults and 260 children. Monitoring and evaluation has consistently showed the impact of our model. Recent monitoring found at the start of therapy 94% of the women we supported reported that they could not manage difficult feelings, but by the end of therapy this reduced to 21%.

Due to our extensive service delivery and strong track record we are widely considered as an expert on refugee mental health. We deliver trainings to professionals on the mental health needs of refugees including working in partnership with the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust to train frontline professionals. Additionally, at the invitation of the Home Office we convene the NGO working group for mental health provision for refugees.

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

In England, the Refugee Council is the most widespread provider of specialist therapeutic support specifically focusing on early intervention for both asylum seekers and refugees. In London, we operate in the context of a patchwork of provision of specialist therapeutic support for asylum seekers and refugees which varies in specialism and reach. We have established referral pathways with other organisations to ensure joined up care for our clients wherever possible. For example, we refer clients who have experienced torture for long-term counselling at Freedom from Torture.

Limited mainstream mental health support is available on the NHS, but barriers prevent refugees access this: a lack of English language skills, low awareness of the services available or of their access rights, and ineligibility for public funds. Additionally, the model of therapeutic care fails to appropriately respond to the specific refugee context and the complex, multiple needs of the client group.

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

We know that the asylum process can be incredibly disempowering for people as they must put their lives on hold and are given little say in their futures, and therefore we try to ensure that the voice and feedback of our beneficiaries informs our service design at all times. One example of our design being informed by our clients is that we adapted our model to include counselling over the telephone when clients are dispersed from Initial Accommodation centres to different areas. This small yet important change in our model of support was introduced in response to our clients' changing needs. This has enabled us to continue to support highly vulnerable people once they have been dispersed to other areas in the country. It is a particularly frightening time during which asylum seekers often have no one to turn to.

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?

- Exclusion: Asylum seekers and refugees are some of the most excluded and hardest to reach people in our society. In addition to suffering from complex mental health issues our clients often have poor English language skills, lack understanding of their rights and entitlements, and are fearful of being returned to their home countries.

- Engaging and Empowering Clients: During individual counselling sessions we empower people by drawing on narrative therapy, meaning they are encouraged to tell their experiences in their own words. We are driven by an awareness that the people we support are the experts on their own stories rather than a motivation to 'fix' them. Bearing witness to their experiences helps them to process traumatic experiences such as rape and torture, particularly where events have been unacknowledged. Group sessions offer people the opportunity to meet others, share their experiences and provide peer support in a supportive environment.

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?

The need for specialist therapeutic support for people seeking asylum and refugees is well documented. Whilst the Refugee Council's service is not preventative in the sense that our clients are already experiencing complex and overwhelming mental health issues, it does take an early-intervention approach. By supporting people at Home Office Initial Accommodation centres, we ensure that we can access this client group as early as possible after they arrive in the UK. Initial Accommodation centres are accommodation centres where people seeking asylum are temporarily placed after claiming asylum but before they are dispersed (often to other areas in the country). Early intervention at this uniquely transitional and vulnerable time prevents mental health issues from worsening or from becoming chronic conditions in the long term. Through our support, clients will feel more resilient and better able to face the complex asylum system and challenges of starting anew in a different country.

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

The Refugee Council will be the sole delivery organisation for this project, however the project receives referrals from and refers on to other specialist organisations. If needed, we can make referrals for asylum seekers and refugees to access additional information and support particularly targeted to their needs. This includes support around their asylum claim (through a referral to legal support services), to health or maternity support services, and for further psychological support e.g. from Freedom from Torture for survivors of torture.

In addition, we will work closely with the Initial Accommodation provider at Barry House, East Dulwich, to ensure that they are referring newly arrived asylum seekers to the service. We already have a strong partnership with the Initial accommodation provider.

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?

Each person has a different story and set of needs, however the majority people begin their journey with us ?surviving? or ?coping?:

Surviving: We take an early intervention approach by delivering support at Initial Accommodation (IA). IAs are centres where asylum seekers are housed temporarily before being dispersed ? potentially to another city entirely. People often arrive at IAs in shock, feeling disorientated and uncertain during a time of acute transition and vulnerability. At this stage our focus is meeting and stabilising needs; including teaching grounding techniques to reduce anxiety, and providing practical casework to reduce issues causing distress, i.e. helping someone access a solicitor for their asylum claim.

Coping: Some clients can cope on a daily basis and might access peer support in groups, be building friendships and breaking social isolation. Group participants can attend an annual trip to build positive memories and see a new part of London.

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

Not applicable.

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
Psychological Therapist (1.00 FTE)	39,012	40,182	0	0	0	79,193
London Therapeutic Services Manager (0.25 FTE)	10,197	10,503	0	0	0	20,701
Therapeutic Services & Volunteer Coordinators (0.30 FTE)	10,338	10,649	0	0	0	20,987
Interpreting (sessional & agency)	5,400	5,400	0	0	0	10,800
Staff & volunteers expenses (including Clinical supervision, travel & subsistence and training)	3,140	3,140	0	0	0	6,280
Individual and Group Therapy - rooms, client travel costs & materials for activities	12,950	12,950	0	0	0	25,900
Outcomes & Financial monitoring & reporting	4,419	4,419	0	0	0	8,838
Project office & ICT costs (desk & virtual desktop)	14,521	14,521	0	0	0	29,043
Indirect Costs	14,997	15,265	0	0	0	30,261

TOTAL:	114,974	117,029	0	0	0	232,003
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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
	0	0	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
Psychological Therapist (1.00 FTE)	39,012	40,182	0	0	0	79,193

TOTAL:	39,012	40,182	0	0	0	79,193
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Who will benefit?

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

70

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

London-wide

Does this project specifically target any groups or communities?

Yes - please enter details below

This project will specifically work with the following age groups:

16-24/25-44/45-64/65-74/75 and over

This project will specifically work with the following gender groups:

Male

Female

Transgender or other gender identity

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:

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

The Refugee Council holds a unique position in England as one of the longest-serving specialist refugee support organisations. We deliver specialist, holistic services across England and last year alone we supported 8,642 people.

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.

not applicable

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

not applicable

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: **Ruby McDougall**

Role within Organisation: **Senior Trust and Statutory Officer**