

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Cornerstone Fund**

**Sheila McKechnie Foundation**

**Adv: Jenny Field**

**Amount requested: £59,000**

**Base: Lambeth**

**Benefit: London-wide**

**Amount recommended: £59,000**

**The Partnership**

Those involved in the development phase of this project include Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Catch 22, Revolving Doors, Church Urban Fund, Community Links, On Road Media, Shelter, TUC and Greater London Volunteering. However, this list is by no means exhaustive and it is envisaged that the range of partners will grow during the life of the project.

**The Application**

Established to commemorate the legendary campaigner, the late Sheila McKechnie, Sheila McKechnie Foundation (SMK) is the UK's leading provider of training and support to those seeking to bring about positive social change.

SMK has three main areas of activity: its training and consultancy activities; its thought leadership which aims to influence and inform public policy; and connecting and networking through a varied programme of events annually, including the National Campaign Awards and the Change Network.

**The Proposal**

Last June, SMK published its Social Change Project report which sought to answer whether what we can learn about how social change is happening today could help to strengthen civil society in the future. The report's key findings included:

- Civil society can reach people and places that the state finds difficult.
- At its best, civil society can drive truly transformational social change.
- Civil society holds the keys to tackling some of society's most pressing issues, from knife crime to climate change.
- However, this 'social power' is constrained by some of our 'systems' and institutions, such as organisational cultures and government policies, as well as attitudes about civil society's 'proper' place.

Building on this, SMK proposed to develop a programme to examine how to bring lived experience more meaningfully and powerfully into social change 'journeys'. The central question will be what 'good' looks like for people with lived experience who are working with civil society for social change and what are the barriers to achieving this. The question will be addressed through three lines of enquiry:

- How can lived experience be brought meaningfully into all social change activity?
- How can lived experience be brought into all levels and functions of organisations from governance structures to front line delivery?
- How can lived experience be used to strengthen one particular social change goal (e.g. decent, affordable rented housing in London).

Some insights and findings may be common across all lines of enquiry. Others may apply to only one or two. This will be an insight and finding in itself.

There will be six stages over the two years of the project:

1. Discussions with people with lived experience to develop a vision of what 'good' looks like when people with lived experience work with civil society for social change and to identify the largest obstacles to that vision.
2. Discuss the same question with civil society leaders and practitioners.
3. Bring the two together for further learning, exploration, testing and interrogation.
4. Explore solutions to the barriers through a mix of approaches, including piloting and testing potential solutions; research and exploration; learning from best practice.
5. Develop and agree insights, recommendations and tools.
6. Share findings.

Following stages one and two, a 'Community of Practice' group will be established to steer the work, comprising people with lived experience who are already engaged with civil society; people with lived experience who are not currently actively engaged with civil society; and civil society organisations able and willing to participate. This, in effect, will be the partnership. SMK used part of its development grant to hold exploratory one-to-one conversations as well as workshops with potential members of this group, as outlined in the first paragraph of this report, and these discussions have helped to shape the proposal before you today. A Learning Leadership Group will be formed from the Community of Practice group in order to identify the issues to be addressed at stage four.

### **Cornerstone Outcomes**

The proposed project meets the longer-term Cornerstone Fund outcomes of *Londoners able to campaign effectively* and *Londoners have increased voice and influence*.

### **The Recommendation**

SMK has a good track record and this is the only proposal with a specific focus on campaigning in the cohort of Cornerstone Fund applications. It therefore has the potential to add valuable learning to this programme.

You may recall that we are working with a group of aligned funders<sup>1</sup> who have funded some of the stage 2 applications. Trust for London (TFL) had identified SMK's proposal as being one it could potentially support. The total funding required over two years is £159,000 of which Trust for London has awarded £100,000 (funding in full would have been an unusually large commitment relative to TFL's usual grant-making levels) and it is recommended therefore that CBT provide the balance.

This is the last of the Round 1 Cornerstone Fund proposals. An update and summary of all the awards is provided in your non-public papers today.

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<sup>1</sup> National Lottery Community Fund, Trust for London, John Lyons Charity and the GLA, with London Councils also engaged with development of Cornerstone Fund.

## Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
07/09/2018	£17,425 towards a project to test how social change systems can be more inclusive of under-represented voices. (A Cornerstone Fund Stage 1 Development Grant)
17/02/2011	£60,000 over two years (2 x £30,000) towards the 'Shout Out Together' project, bringing together young people from different communities to engage positively on issues important to London.

## Financial Information

Although there was a decrease in income in 2018-19 compared with the previous year (due to less grant income from trusts and foundations), income for 2019-20 is forecast to increase. This will be largely on unrestricted income due to a combination of core grants secured from Paul Hamlyn Foundation, John Ellerman Foundation and Josphe Rowntree Charitable Trust as well an increase in earned income (up from £10,000 in 2017-18 to £50,000 already secured in 2019-20). This in turn will have a positive effect on the level of free reserves held.

Year end as at 31st March	2018 Signed Accounts £	2019 Draft Accounts £	2020 Forecast £
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	378,598	322,044	476,724
- % of income confirmed as at 13/08/2019	N/A	N/A	95%
Expenditure	(338,384)	(340,972)	(440,696)
Total surplus/(deficit)	40,214	(18,928)	36,028
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	27,265	(19,196)	
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	12,949	267	36,028
	40,214	(18,929)	36,028
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	72,971	169,852	254,972
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	31,683	36,918	72,946
No of months of operating expenditure	5.2	2.6	3.4
Reserves policy target	18,243	42,463	63,743
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	13,440	(5,545)	9,203