

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Advice and Support

Day-Mer Turkish/Kurdish Community Centre

Adv: Tania Bronstein

Base: Hackney

Amount requested: £99,796

(Revised request: £111,959)

Amount recommended: £111,960

Benefit: Hackney, Haringey, Enfield

The Applicant

Based in a former local library in Hackney, Day Mer has been providing a range of services for the Turkish speaking community living in North London since 1989. These include a drop-in centre, information and advice, supplementary education and youth services, as well as regular arts and cultural events and festivals.

The Application

Day Mer seeks a three-year grant to deliver general advice with casework in the areas of welfare rights, housing, immigration and employment. These will be provided at Day Mer's Hackney base, by phone and via home visits for elderly and disabled people. The original request sought funds to meet salary costs of two part-time workers, each working three days per week, plus associated running costs. Day Mer has subsequently sent a revised request. This seeks funds for the equivalent of one full-time post in line with your usual policy and amends some mistakes noted at the assessment visit.

The Recommendation

Day Mer has decades of experience delivering advice to AQS standards and OISC exemption to support a highly disadvantaged minority ethnic community. The charity enjoys significant support from its community and has a high level of engagement with the local voluntary sector, the BME advice sector, and in boroughs with large numbers of Turkish/Kurdish residents. You are recommended to agree a grant at the revised request's level, subject to the condition below, which is advised in order to make the charity's safeguarding as robust as possible:

£ 111,960 over three years (£36,520; £37,280, and £38,160) towards salary costs of two part-time Advisers (one 0.6FTE, another 0.4FTE) and associated running costs of an advice service. The grant is conditional upon receipt of a safeguarding policy in respect of vulnerable adults.

Funding History

None.

Background and detail of proposal

Day Mer supports people in the Turkish speaking communities, broadly comprising Turkish and Kurdish Turks, both migrants and refugees which the GLA estimated to number between 100,000 -140,000 in the boroughs of Hackney, Islington, Haringey and Enfield in 2009. These communities hit high on several indicators of social exclusion, including poor housing, limited English amongst first generation migrants, high rates of unemployment affecting newer arrivals, and large numbers in low paid jobs in service sectors such as catering. Unsurprisingly, Day Mer records high levels of demand for advice in areas of social welfare, especially from isolated older people

with little knowledge of English and the ways of the system. Day Mer has offered advice with casework support since inception. This was funded by LB Hackney for many years, and later by London Councils, but both cut their funding substantially a few years ago. Nowadays, LB Hackney funds Day Mer to offer advice two days per week, which is insufficient to meet demand, hence this application to City Bridge.

Day Mer has a safeguarding policy for working with children. As this proposal targets older and disabled people, the charity is currently drafting a policy specifically for vulnerable adults with support from Hackney Voluntary Services Council.

Financial Information

The charity used to rely heavily on funding from LB Hackney, which in 2013/14 provided 80% of its annual income. Following drastic cuts to the Authority's grants budgets, annual turnover for the charity has significantly reduced. Day Mer has adjusted to change by diversifying funding sources and reducing both outgoings and dependency on restricted grants. Nowadays individuals from the Turkish community contribute some £15,000 per year and a well-attended festival in Clissold Park raises c£30,000 every Summer. The increased unrestricted income has been used to offset restricted funds deficits and to gradually increase the level of free reserves which are forecasted to stand above the policy level by the end of the current financial year.

Year end as at 31st March	2018 Signed Accounts £	2019 Draft Accounts £	2020 Forecast £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	137,279	101,287	165,050
- % of Income confirmed as at 17.07.2019	N/A	N/A	59%
Expenditure	(123,843)	(96,875)	(157,550)
Total surplus/(deficit)	13,436	4,412	7,500
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	0	(12,063)	(6,700)
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	13,436	16,475	14,200
	13,436	4,412	7,500
Cost of Raising Funds	17,565	26,000	33,000
- % of Income	12.8%	25.7%	20.0%
Total Expenditure	123,843	96,875	157,550
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	21,347	37,822	52,022
No of months of operating expenditure	2.1	4.7	4.0
Reserves policy target	30,960	24,218	39,387
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(9,613)	13,604	12,635