

MEETING: 30/01/2020

Ref: 15767

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Strategic Initiatives - Bridging Divides

London Funders

Adv: Jenny Field

Amount requested: £300,000

Base: Tower Hamlets

Benefit: London-wide

Amount recommended: £300,000

The Applicant

London Funders is the membership network for funders and investors in London's civil society. Its mission is to strengthen and support funders and to promote effective funding practices in order to meet the needs of Londoners.

The Application

You are asked to continue to support the development of the London's Giving movement for a further three years. Since 2014, 12 place-based giving schemes have become established (that is, are both receiving and distributing resources); 8 are in development (that is, have staff and local accountability structures but have not yet launched); one is in the process of being developed; and a further 8 boroughs are interested in developing schemes and have met with the London's Giving team.

Funding for a further three years would enable the development work to continue; the capacity of existing schemes to be built; the London Giving network to be strengthened; the learning and evidence base to be built on and developed; and the future sustainability of local schemes to be scoped out.

The Recommendation

London's Giving is now a well-established 'brand' and the London Giving network is welcomed by local schemes who give generously of their learning, knowledge and time in order to share experience. However, it needs to be borne in mind that the development of new and emerging schemes is a slow process. This proposal combines capacity building support for existing schemes to make them stronger and more sustainable with the development of new schemes.

Your officer is of the view that place-based giving schemes have the potential to play an important role in the development of stronger communities and as part of local civil society infrastructure support. Funding for a further three years is advised.

£300,000 over three years (3 x £100,000) towards the further development of the London's Giving movement.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
23/11/2017	£26,510 from funds for the Anniversary Programme for civil society infrastructure support towards various activities related to the implementation of The Way Ahead.
20/03/2017	£300,000 over three years (3 x £100,000) to continue to develop place-based giving in London.

24/11/2016	£14,000 to support the development of London's Giving for a further 3 months to the end of March 2017.
22/09/2016	£11,030 towards the December 2015 conference, together with the production costs of the interim report and the final report and the launch of The Way Ahead in April 2016.
24/05/2016	To provide bridging funding of £32,000 for London's Giving from May 2016 to December 2016
18/03/2016	£250,000 over 5 years (5 x £50,000) towards core costs and subject to external evaluation after three years.
19/06/2014	£5,000 towards the £15,000 costs of commissioning research into the current and future landscape of play and youth services for children and young people in London. The grant is payable to London Funders who will manage the project.
12/02/2014	£100,000 over two years (£50,000; £50,000) towards the core costs of London Funders on condition that a satisfactory revised budget is submitted to take account of the increased activity and related spend to deliver LF's strategic plan.
30/06/2011	A grant of £84,000 over three years (£30,000, £27,000, £27,000) towards the core costs of London Funders.

Background and detail of proposal

You have funded London Funders to host the London's Giving network since 2014, with grants totalling £406,000. Each local scheme is quite different, responding as they do to local conditions. Nevertheless, they all share a set of common principles:

- Recognition that everyone has something to give – time, talent, connections and resources;
- Commitment to collaborative working where each partner has an equal voice;
- A shared understanding of local priorities, not driven by funders;
- Independence from any one stakeholder in delivering solutions;
- Sharing power and decision-making with communities.

If funding is approved today, four key workstreams are proposed:

- i) **Tailored local support:** Both investing in the capacity of established schemes and proactively supporting emerging schemes;
- ii) **Strengthen peer networks:** Sharing learning and gaining understanding of how to navigate complex local and regional contexts and how to build strong partnerships;
- iii) **Build evidence and learning:** During the past 3 years, Rocket Science have worked with London's Giving and local schemes to develop common reporting metrics¹. The next 3 years will be an opportunity to generate clear evidence of how place-based giving schemes can help to tackle inequality and what change it can realistically deliver in different contexts;
- iv) **Deliver a sustainable legacy:** Scope out how local schemes can be effectively supported in the future and how.

Financial Information

London Funders' reserves policy is to hold 6 months' worth of total expenditure in free reserves. Free reserves are forecast to be short of this target in 2020-21. However, officers are satisfied that with 3.6 months' of total expenditure in free reserves, there are sufficient funds available in the unlikely event that the organisation needs to wind down. At the time of assessment, a small deficit is forecast on unrestricted funds for 2020/21. However, this is not considered a cause for concern at this stage.

¹ It is a condition of funding that any local giving scheme funded by CBT must use these metrics

Year end as at 31st March	2019 Signed Accounts £	2020 Forecast £	2021 Budget £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	300,406	344,567	354,600
- % of Income confirmed as at 12/12/2019	N/A	N/A	40%
Expenditure	(298,538)	(339,395)	(350,276)
Total surplus/(deficit)	1,868	5,172	4,324
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	0	4,500	4,855
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	1,868	672	(531)
	1,868	5,172	4,324
Total expenditure	298,538	339,395	350,276
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	104,992	105,664	105,133
No of months of operating expenditure	4.2	3.7	3.6
Reserves policy target	149,269	169,698	175,138
No of months of total expenditure	6.0	6.0	6.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(44,277)	(64,034)	(70,005)

Summary Assessment of Strategic Initiative for Committee Decision

(Use: Y/N/Potentially or N/A where relevant)

FILTERS	
<i>Will The pro-active grant:</i>	
Further the Trust's Vision and Mission (a fairer London & tackling disadvantage)?	Y
Support work within one of existing Bridging Divides programmes (BD)? Or, meet a clear need that has arisen since (BD) was agreed?	Y
Have the potential for impact beyond that of an individual reactive grant or number of individual grants?	Y
Be affordable within the agreed annual budget (from the Trust alone or in combination with other funders) and, looking forward, leave sufficient budget to meet anticipated pro-active grants for the remainder of the financial year?	Y
Be made to an organisation(s) that conforms to the Trust's eligibility criteria and has the capacity and expertise to deliver the work?	Y

PRIORITISATION GUIDANCE	
Evidence	
Is there external and/or internal research and information that supports the need for the proposed grant?	Y
Is there external and/or internal research and information that indicates the approach proposed in the grant will be successful?	Y
Is there evidence that indicates the work will be hard to fund from other sources?	Y
Impact	
Will the grant tackle a root cause(s), or positively influence policy or practice?	Y
Will the work/approach funded be replicable?	Yes but tailored to local needs
Does the grant provide an opportunity to strengthen Civil Society in London?	Y
Is the work sustainable beyond the period of the grant?	Not known
Can the impact of the work be measured through evaluation?	Y