

CITY BRIDGE TRUST – Delegated Authority (Requests £50k to £100k)

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Connecting the Capital\Arts, sports, health and/or well-being projects for disabled people

Sound Minds

Ref: 15722

Amount requested: £63,000

Adv: Ciaran Rafferty

Base: Wandsworth

Benefit: Wandsworth

Amount recommended: £63,000

Purpose of grant request: Sound Minds requires 5 year core funding to expand our arts and music services and facilitate a handover to a new Chief Executive.

The Applicant

Sound Minds, based in Battersea, is a registered charity and a social enterprise which uses the arts (particularly music) to engage and improve the lives of people who have long term mental ill health. It has a long and strong track record for training, employing and building the confidence of people referred. The majority of staff originally accessed the organisation to receive the services they now help deliver, whilst the management committee/Board comprise many people who have been, or are, service users. The studios accommodate music rehearsal, recording and film-making facilities, a visual art facility and a theatre group. One aspect of their work and which you have funded previously – Canerows Peer Support – works with people in hospital prior to their discharge so they can better access the Studio provision when they are back in the community. The main focus of Sound Minds work for more than two decades is people with enduring mental health problems, such as schizophrenic illnesses and bipolar disorder.

Background and detail of proposal

This request, for core costs, is to enable the organisation to succession plan. The current CEO has been in post for many years (since soon after the organisation was established) and plans to retire in two years' time though after a period of gradually reducing his working hours. Trust funding, should you agree it, would enable the charity to recruit a new CEO sooner rather than later so that both the new and the outgoing postholders could have a significant handover period and enable the organisation to maximise accrued knowledge and expertise. Under the charity's business plan the current CEO would be retained in a part-time role to assist the new CEO and add some managerial capacity during the transition. The current manager also plays a significant role in project delivery and the idea is to use some of the funding to enable other staff to do this so that more time can be spent on developmental work (eg volunteer development).

Funding History

In November 2014 you awarded a grant of £72,000 over three years for a p/t Project Worker and related costs of the Canerows project. This grant was successfully monitored.

Financial Information

Ongoing funding from the local authority for 2020/21 had not been confirmed at the time of application but has been subsequently. Whilst reserves held currently are above the policy level the organisation will have some one-off capital costs to meet on the refurbishment of their premises in the year ahead. They also intend to use some of the reserves to develop a potential social enterprise activity as part of their plans to become less reliant on local authority funding.

Year end as at 31 March	2019	2020	2021
	Signed Accounts	Forecast	Budget
	£	£	£
Income & expenditure:			
Income	156,994	143,655	151,637
- % of Income confirmed as at 24/01/20	N/A	98%	47%
Expenditure	(159,616)	(146,846)	(153,242)
Total surplus/(deficit)	(2,622)	(3,191)	(1,605)
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	0	(2,400)	(4,992)
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(2,622)	(791)	3,387
	(2,622)	(3,191)	(1,605)
Operating Expenditure	159,616	146,846	153,242
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	140,742	139,951	138,346
No of months of operating expenditure	10.6	11.4	10.8
Reserves policy target	79,808	73,423	76,621
No of months of operating expenditure	6.0	6.0	6.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	60,934	66,528	61,725

Recommendation

This is a stable and well-managed organisation working consistently well with a significant cohort of disadvantaged people. It is true to say that it is managed by people with lived experience and has significant impact as a result. The proposal is evidence of their desire to ensure that the organisation can be sustainable and their approach to forward-planning is commendable. A grant is advised:

£63,000 over five years (£15,000; £14,000; £13,000; £12,000; £9,000) for core costs to underpin the successful running of the organisation through and beyond the recruitment and hand-over of a new CEO.

Approved.....
Chief Grants Officer

Approved.....
Chair

Approved.....
Deputy Chair

Date.....

Date.....

Date.....