

## **CITY BRIDGE TRUST – Delegated Authority (Requests up to £250k)**

### **ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Positive Transitions\Mental health & homelessness**

**Cardboard Citizens**

**Ref: 15921**

**Amount requested: £167,991**

**Adv: Gilly Green**

**Base: Tower Hamlets**

**Benefit: London-wide**

**Amount recommended: £152,420**

**Purpose of grant request:** To test, strengthen and embed the strength based and trauma informed aspects of our work across our service, enabling us to have a greater impact on the wellbeing of Members

#### **The Applicant**

Cardboard Citizen's (CC) was founded in 1995 in the spaces around what was then known as The Bullring in London's Waterloo. It makes theatre for social change, empowering people with lived experience of homelessness, as well as striving to change society's perceptions of homeless people. Its theatre is often participatory, with and for homeless people telling stories that aim to effect change locally, nationally, on the stage, in the street, through hostels and prisons. It provides arts-based qualifications, advice and training to support young people away from homelessness and guidance from highly trained staff – critical for those with significant support needs such as housing, family and mental health issues.

#### **Background and detail of proposal**

Poor mental health is both a cause and consequence of homelessness. 41% of all members have disclosed they have a mental health need; with a high proportion of people disclosing adverse childhood experiences or trauma. CC recognises that the individuals they work with are often those most in need of psychologically informed help but are also among those least able to access mainstream psychological therapy services. In response CC wishes to develop and embed Trauma Informed/Strength Based (TI/SB) approaches into its main programme of work, enabling staff to better support those with mental health issues. Many of CC's more vulnerable members find CC a more accessible place to seek support than conventional services. Adopting this model will enable them to get better support but require specialist training for staff. CC plan extensive consultation with partner organisations within the sector who use TI/SB, a pilot scheme with 45 members, full implementation and wide dissemination and promotion of the model. The grant request is a contribution to the salaries of key staff who will steer this innovation through the organisation, specialist training in TI/SB work and to project and management costs.

Covid 19 has had a significant impact on the organisation. All face to face work has been suspended and an early survey out to members demonstrated an urgent need for members to stay connected. CC regularly checks in by phone with about 200 of the most vulnerable members and has adapted and run some imaginative online impro workshops - London in Lockdown was an early one and most activities are being delivered in some way online. Whilst much of the future is unknown, CC

wishes to pursue the development of its TI/SB approach and embed this practice into the adapted shape of whatever may be delivered longer term.

### Financial Information

CC's income comes from a mix of statutory sources, Trusts and Foundations and self-generated income. There are gaps especially this year in self-generated income from performances, but the actress Kate Winslet has launched a campaign to support the organisation and this is expected to yield about £125,00 and CC has applied to several emergency funding schemes. Whilst the organisation can cover some shortfall this year from reserves, further savings may be required. CC is aware of your offer to have some of the grant converted to core costs, and if approved, is likely to take this up to ease them through the current situation.

Year end as at 31 MARCH	2019	2020	2021
	Signed Accounts	Forecast	Budget
	£	£	£
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	1,306,269	1,305,348	1,132,700
- % of Income confirmed as at 07/05/2020	N/A	100%	68%
Expenditure	(1,211,566)	(1,305,308)	(1,237,996)
Total surplus/(deficit)	<b>94,703</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>(105,296)</b>
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	88,003	(316,144)	(127,484)
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	6,700	316,184	22,188
	<b>94,703</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>(105,296)</b>
Operating Expenditure (unrestricted)	267,006	257,926	212,736
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	229,062	545,246	567,434
No of months of operating expenditure	2.3	5.0	5.5
Reserves policy target	302,891	326,327	309,499
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(73,829)	218,919	257,935

### Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
22/09/2016	Stepping Stones application declined.
09/07/2015	£49,700 to enable Cardboard Citizens to develop its business modelling in order to expand its training programme for external agencies.
28/01/2015	£2,000 to match CEP funding towards the wage costs of 1 Apprentice for 1 year.

### Recommendation

This is a well-known organisation working across London with homeless and marginalised communities. Trauma informed approaches to working with people with mental health problems and adverse childhood experiences is well evidenced but has not been developed extensively in the arts sector so this is an exciting opportunity. The way the budget is structured shows a contribution to several core salaries, but your officer is satisfied that there will be a considerable focus on this development throughout the organisation. However, the original budget had a significant increase in salary costs for years 2 & 3 without adequate explanation and a subsequent reduced budget has been received – hence the lower recommended

grant level. CC has a challenge going forwards, compounded by the wider uncertainty of a return to theatre, but it is showing itself to be an adaptable organisation and still very much in demand. A grant is recommended:

***£152,420 over three years (£51,670; £52,740; £48,010) towards developing and embedding trauma informed practice into CC's programme and promoting the value of this approach more widely throughout the arts-based sector.***

**Approved.....**  
Chief Grants Officer /  
Deputy CGO

**Date.....**

**Approved.....**  
Chair

**Date.....**

**Approved.....**  
Deputy Chair

**Date.....**