

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Offenders**Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea****Adv: Tim Wilson****Base: Kensington & Chelsea****Benefit: Kensington & Chelsea****Amount requested: £123,500****{Revised request: £125,000}****Amount recommended: £125,000****The Charity**

Established in 1969, Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea (VCKC) is the key volunteer development agency serving the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. It is one of the larger volunteer centres in London, with a reputation for leading in good practice in the development of volunteering. The charity supports volunteer involving organisations in the third and public sectors, as well as volunteers seeking placements. It has developed a particular focus on supporting people at making transitions to more independent living, especially disabled people, carers and ex-offenders.

The Application

VCKC has run a volunteering programme for ex-offenders and those approaching release since 2002. "Inside Out" works with inmates of HMP Brixton and Wormwood Scrubs to prepare them for life outside. It then provides supported volunteer placements and aims to reduce re-offending by improving employability prospects. The programme has been well-supported by the Tudor Trust (another independent grant maker) and the charity now seeks to increase the scale of work with funding from City Bridge Trust.

The Recommendation

VCKC has developed "Inside Out" into a successful programme offering structured support to serving and ex-offenders as well as volunteer involving organisations. Since the original application VCKC has received further funding from Tudor Trust and now wishes to increase the scale of "Inside Out" in order to explore the potential of taking on public service delivery contracts. The funding requested from City Bridge Trust is for a portion of running costs and a part-time Resettlement Worker who will support ex-offenders who are older and those with mental health issues. The Trust is asked to provide slightly less than 60% of the total programme costs.

£125,000 over three years (£41,000; £43,350; £40,650) for a part-time (17.5 hpw) Resettlement Worker plus a contribution to the running costs of "Inside Out".

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
01/02/2007	£86,000 over three years (£26,500; £28,500; £31,000) for a project providing best practice support to volunteer involving organisations.

Background and detail of proposal

VCKC's "Inside Out" programme receives referrals from probation and prison staff as well as organisations working within prisons. When it was originally established the charity only worked with people convicted of minor crimes but it now supports a

much wider range of beneficiaries. Today the only offence category "Inside Out" does not work with is arson, and this is at the behest of the prison service. Work begins with a frank discussion of expectations, and VCKC will remove people from the programme if they fail to keep to agreed standards of time-keeping and placement attendance. Volunteer involving organisations receive support and VCKC works to ensure good matches between individuals and placements. The average duration of an "Inside Out" placement is 3 months after which participants usually move into employment or other voluntary work.

Financial Information

The Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea advise that the deficit of £60,933 (18.8% of turnover) in 2013-14 arose due to several grants funding streams ending and the charity covering the costs of staff redundancies.

Total forecast income for the current year 2015-16 is £387,028, of which £364,600 (94.2%) has been confirmed by April 2015.

The charity has not previously disclosed its cost of generating funds in its accounts but has provided an estimate for 2014/15 and the current year. These estimates do appear to be low however and the charity has agreed to review these sums when preparing its year-end accounts. The charity advised that costs are likely to be low as a proportion of its funding comes from a core grant from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (2013/14: £118,500).

Year end at 31 March	2013/14 Independently examined accounts	2014/15 Draft accounts	2015/16 Current Year Budget
	£	£	£
Income and Expenditure			
Income	324,856	321,525	387,028
Expenditure	385,789	324,118	380,178
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(62,614)	(2,746)	13,100
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	1,681	153	(6,250)
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	(60,933)	(2,593)	6,850
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	(18.8%)	(0.8%)	1.8%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	-	7,306 (2.3%)	9,000 (2.3%)
Free unrestricted reserves			
Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End	85,690	82,944	96,044
How many months' worth of expenditure	2.7	3.1	3.0
Reserves Policy target	96,477	81,030	95,045
How many months' worth of expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(10,787)	1,914	999