

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Improving London's Environment**Learning Through Landscapes Trust****Adv: Sandra Davidson****Amount requested: £96,417****Base: Outside London****(Revised request: £76,882)****Benefit: London-wide****Amount recommended: £76,800****The Charity**

Learning Through Landscapes (LTL) is a national charity working to ensure that every child benefits from outdoor learning and play. It advises government, engages the private sector and empowers school communities and early years settings to make the best of their outdoor spaces for children's education and well-being. Over the past 25 years, LTL has worked directly with 10,000 schools, raised over £24million for grounds improvements and trained thousands of teachers and practitioners to help them rethink the design and use of their outdoor environment. A recent development includes leading on a UK-wide biodiversity project – Polli:Nation, a programme which supports schools and communities in helping to protect the future of dwindling pollinating insect populations. A grant of £1.4million was awarded earlier this year by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Application

LTL is seeking funding for two years to develop to a London based project 'Enterprise Growing Gardens' (EGG) supporting children to grow and sell produce from their school grounds and local community spaces. Specifically, the application requests funding for the salary and associated costs of developing this project.

The Recommendation

The request to the Trust has been reduced since the original application (as shown at Appendix A to the application form) following discussion with your officer. It was agreed that some budget items can be delivered at a lower cost, and the level of grant has been adjusted without compromising the capacity to deliver the intended outcomes.

£76,800 over two years (£39,300; £37,500) for the salary of a p/t Project Officer (2dpw), plus admin support and associated running costs.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
02/07/2009	£75,000 over three years (£27,500; £27,900; £19,600) towards the Fruit-full Schools Project in London.
09/09/2004	£38,000 over 2 years (£19,000 x 2) towards an environmental education project for young people aged between 11 and 19 years.
13/07/2000	£150,000 (£60,000, £50,000, £40,000) towards the costs of a post developing marketing and membership services in the London area.

Background and detail of proposal

Over the last two decades LTL has seen the needs of children, the environment and the education sector change dramatically. More recently there has been a resurgence of interest in connecting children with their natural environment and terms such as 'nature deficit disorder' are now commonplace. Modern pressures are

now impacting on children's health with 30% of children aged between 2 and 15 being overweight or obese (Dept of Health 2013) and three children in every classroom having a diagnosable mental health disorder (Young Minds 2013). LTL is delivering and developing a number of interventions relevant to these emerging challenges and is continuing to focus on providing support to those children and communities where their work will make a difference.

The Enterprise Growing Gardens project aims to enhance school and local community spaces and improve access to them. It will provide opportunities for children and young people to access 'green areas' and take part in high quality growing activities in these areas on a regular and consistent basis. The project will also aim to enable communities to share school growing spaces. Up to 10 schools in London will be able to apply to be part of the programme. The work will be delivered by employing a project officer to manage the project and organise a programme of training and events, providing new opportunities to local business representatives and local community volunteers to enjoy hands-on experiences of local growing projects. A webpage, linked to www.neighbourly.com will have details of participating schools and businesses. The project will introduce children to organic growing practices to engender an understanding of the impact food production has on the environment local and globally. The project will be steered and supported by the EGG board made up of LTL staff, school representatives, local businesses and community members. It is anticipated that over 300 children and young people p.a will benefit from the project activities. EGG hopes to up-scale the project beyond the funding period with sponsorship from a major food retailer.

Financial Information

Forecast income for the current year is £1,027,317, of which £803,798 (78%) had been secured by 1st June 2015. The cost of generating funds is not disclosed in the accounts. LTL has provided an estimate based on its fundraising costs and has advised it will review the disclosure of this figure in future accounts.

Year end at 31 March 2014	2013/14 Audited Accounts	2014/15 Forecast	2015/16 Current Year Budget
	£	£	£
Income and Expenditure			
Income	1,103,025	929,875	1,027,317
Expenditure	1,032,889	908,228	1,042,562
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	389,992	(1,853)	6,164
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	320,008	70,586	(21,409)
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	70,136	21,647	(15,245)
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	6.4%	(2.3%)	(1.5%)
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	-	44,770 (4.8%)	45,209 (4.4 %)
Free unrestricted reserves			
Free unrestricted reserves held at Year End	471,475	469,622	475,786
How many months' worth of expenditure	5.5	6.2	5.6
Reserves Policy target	258,222 – 516,444	227,057 – 454,114	253,679 – 507,359
How many months' worth of expenditure	3.0 – 6.0	3.0 – 6.0	3.0 – 6.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	213,253 – (44,969)	242,565 – 15,508	222,107 – (31,573)