

City Bridge Trust

DRAFT Funding Strategy, 2018-2023
Bridging divides

January 2017



Introduction

In the last 21 years, the City of London Corporation's charitable funder, City Bridge Trust (CBT) has made grants of over £330 million to over 7000 organisations who are working with the most disadvantaged people in every London Borough. CBT is London's largest independent funder, distributing approximately £20m each year.

We currently fund a broad range of work focused on tackling disadvantage in London, from improving Londoners' mental health, to services that strengthen London's voluntary sector.

Every five years, CBT conducts a review and assessment of the work that we do in fulfilling our current vision of a fairer London. This process helps to ensure that we remain relevant and alive to the changing needs of Londoners, informing the funding strategy for the next five years and a grants budget totalling £100 million. We are hopeful that our review process will give us the time to think deeply about our role in ensuring that London is a city where everyone can thrive.

In September 2016, the formal work for planning CBT's 2018 to 2023 funding strategy began. This document outlines a proposed **draft** strategy for CBT, which considers the use of CBT's assets to deal with the disadvantage faced by marginalised Londoners, in order to make this a city where everyone can thrive, and rises to the challenges and opportunities that exist within London.

This draft will evolve over time through feedback and support from our committee, our staff, staff at the City of London Corporation (CoLC) and a wide range of external stakeholders from multiple sectors. The feedback on this particular draft will be gathered in multiple ways in February and March 2017 mainly - full details can be found on our website: <https://www.citybridgetrust.org.uk/strategic-review/>

We expect that the feedback will be robust; and demanding of changes to this draft - some of which will be implemented in full or partly. This draft strategy shows some significant differences and similarities to CBT's current funding strategy - Investing in Londoners - and provides a clear direction of how we intend to continue addressing complex and seemingly intractable societal problems through our funding and networks.

Sufina Ahmad,
Head of Strategic Review, City Bridge Trust

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Context

Every year millions of people come to London; some visit as tourists, some come here to work, but not live, others for their education, and then there are those who arrive to make their home. It is a city constantly in flux, where new communities live alongside those Londoners who are already benefitting from the many accolades that the city has to offer, in terms of its: culture, heritage, diversity, resilience and wealth.

However, not all Londoners experience all it has to offer positively. In 2016 City Bridge Trust was part of a partnership of funders who funded the London Fairness Commission, which asked the question ‘Is London Fair?’ The commission agreed that London was an ‘*extraordinary city*’. However it bore a warning too about the divides emerging in terms of the cost of living and the wealth gaps between the richest and poorest in the city. The Commission published its finding in March 2016, with a clear statement that if we do not act now to address these inequalities, then we risk London becoming a:

‘...a playground for the super-rich, a treadmill for the middle-classes and a workhouse for the poor.’

(Lord Victor Adebawale, Chair of the London Fairness Commission)

Not long after this, 2016 became a year of unprecedented political changes in the UK, with the outcome of the Brexit vote, also resulting in a new Prime Minister. These potentially seismic shifts come on the back of financial crises, recessions, global economic slowdown, loss of faith in some institutions, significant reductions in public spending, and for civil society intense scrutiny as to their role and effectiveness in creating a fair and good society.

Regardless of your politics, most agree that this is a time of uncertainty and that there is a need for bold and creative thinking. It is a time for all parts of society to come together and respond.

CBT is unique in the support and input that it can provide, simply because we have strong links to civil society and the constituencies they represent through our funding, as well as having strong links to local, national and regional Government and the business sector through our trustee, the City of London Corporation. These links are particularly significant in times when the topic of the winners and losers from globalisation are being hotly considered by so many in the UK and globally.

This draft strategy sets out CBT’s ambitions to work with a wide range of partners from across society to use all of its assets, including the £100 million it will have available over this five year period, to bridge the divides that are so well-evidenced in our city, and make this a city where everyone can thrive. CBT is not alone in wanting to succeed in this - it has dominated many of our discussions with external stakeholders, as well as being the subject of consultations we have been invited to participate in, including the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan’s consultation in late 2016 exploring his Office’s role in making London *a city for all Londoners*.

Who has been involved in developing this draft strategy

CBT has built the evidence base for its next strategy through working collaboratively and meaningfully with Londoners and key stakeholders from all sectors linked to its work. Stakeholders have been engaged through face-to-face group and one-to-one meetings; attending and contributing to various conferences, workshops and meetings; commissioning an independent grantee perception survey through the Center for Effective Philanthropy (227 anonymous responses received); launching an online survey open to all (62 responses received); and through our social media hashtag #BridgingLondon. This is a conversation that will continue until the next strategy is agreed, and beyond.

Therefore, since August 2016 CBT have engaged with over 500 people to help inform its thinking. A list of the 300 people who have contributed to the review, along with a brief summary of how they have been engaged can be found on our [website](#).

The details of the Strategic Review were also promoted at the following events, but no lists exist of the exact people in attendance:

1. **London Conference, 16.11.16** - A large number of people engaged with us directly at our exhibitor stand, and through the social media hashtag for the event #LonConf2016. The conference was attended by mostly private sector organisations, as well as a good range of civil society and public sector colleagues.
2. **Greater London Volunteering Conference, 18.11.16** - CBT co-hosted a workshop with London Funders on funding and CBT's Strategic Review, and 50 people mainly from civil society organisations came along.

This work has been further underpinned by research commissioned to analyse need in London through the prism of disadvantage; funding best practice; and to determine CBT's role in London's funding ecology. To-date, a Literature Review of the research analysing need through the prism of disadvantage has been completed in full, and it was published on the CBT website in October 2016.

The research commissioned for completion by Rob Bell, (to review best practice within the funding sector) will be available by mid-February 2017, and will inform the processes and approaches we apply to distributing our funding in the future. The same timeframe applies to CBT's decision to commission Collaborate CIC to complete a market scoping review of CBT. This will form the basis from which CBT begins to devise options as to how the work of funders and investors in London's civil society can be mapped to create a navigable overview of the London funding ecology.

CBT is immensely grateful to everyone who has so generously given up their time to share their expertise with us. A diverse range of views has been expressed to-date, and this draft strategy is our first attempt to gather the themes and ideas that were expressed in such a way that enables CBT to add real value.

Summary of CBT's next funding strategy

The intention to date has been to conduct a Strategic Review that is robust, of its time, and effectively takes in to consideration and reflects the diversity of views expressed by internal and external stakeholders, which have been gathered in multiple ways.

Funders like CBT are seeking to tackle some of the toughest social issues facing some of the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups in 21st century society, at a time when resources are diminishing, and demand is increasing. This draft strategy considers how we operate in a way that is flexible and ambitious, which shows thought leadership, influences others and has the potential to succeed in fulfilling our vision.

A visual representation of the strategy is included on page 12 of this document. The key points to highlight are:

1. A strategy like this requires real thought in to how to best articulate its priorities, and implement the overall vision that has been set out. This will be our focus in the coming months, alongside the thinking we have done already.
2. This strategy enables CBT to take a vision and values led approach to its funding decisions. This means that we are looking to partner with organisations who share our vision and values. CBT has funded incredible organisations over the years, and we want to work more equally with organisations we support in order to find the solutions to the divides that we hope to bridge.
3. The strategy that we set out for 2018 will have changed by 2023. There is so much uncertainty ahead of us, in terms of: Brexit, a general election, a mayoral election and the overwhelming feedback from stakeholders that there are communities and civil society organisations that are in crisis. It is important therefore to have a strategy that is committed to adapting and learning, which looks at where it is making progress and where it needs to change, in response to these uncertainties.
4. This strategy provides our partners with a toolbox of different funding approaches, and a funder 'plus' programme which helps our partners to thrive too. Our approaches will be diverse, using both our monetary and non-monetary assets in a way that is fair, representative and proportionate.
5. At the moment we are considering our funding priorities through the following headers:
 - Place based funding
 - Addressing inequalities
 - Transitions
 - Fairness and voice

This may mean that the ideas we support in our next strategy are broader and less defined than we are currently used to. It will encourage us to be more relational and flexible in our approaches, resulting in us developing specific areas of impact over time.

CBT's next funding strategy

This strategy contains a revised vision for our work, which expresses the belief that London should be a city where disadvantaged and marginalised individuals and communities are supported to not just survive, but to thrive too. The mission will be to use all of our knowledge, networks and assets to champion London's biggest asset - its people. We believe that it is only by *bridging divides* that London can become a city that truly works for everyone.

CBT has a clear mandate to serve Londoners and the communities they connect to, as the CoLC's charitable funder, and we do this predominantly through funding civil society, as well as having clear links to local, regional and national Government, the private sector and the wider funding ecology.

The draft strategy has been condensed in to a one page visual representation on page 12 of this document. Ultimately, the main things to note are that the themes and approaches through which we distribute our funding will be broader. However, we still intend to remain ambitious and focussed on the impact we can make as a funder.

CBT has shown that it can pick amazing organisations to fund; and can fund in ways that are considered creative and effective. This draft strategy provides us with a strategy that plays to these strengths, through placing values and vision at the heart of the decision making process rather than arbitrary themes and outcomes; and through expanding the ways in which we can support organisations through our monetary and non-monetary assets.

The draft strategy ensures that we lead by example and are accountable through our strategy - both by staying true to fulfilling our vision, and by remaining responsive to what is likely to continue to be fast-paced change within communities.

It is a draft strategy that listens to the feedback provided, urging us to be flexible in its approaches and not to assume expertise on social issues, and instead empower communities, Londoners and organisations on the ground to tell us what they need in order to thrive. The various 'parts' of the strategy can be summarised as follows:

- **CBT's vision and mission**

CBT's revised vision set out above will provide us with real clarity of purpose, and will form the basis of all of our funding and non-funding decisions. Having a vision-led approach means that we will reduce our focus on having many different and specific funding streams through which we fund organisations. This allows us to remain alive to the fast pace at which the needs of disadvantaged and marginalised Londoners is changing, and it recognises the fact that communities and the people within them exist within multi-faceted systems.

- **CBT's values**

CBT is seeking to partner with organisations that share our values, which are currently articulated as independence, inclusion and integrity.

Going forwards we have defined our over-arching value base as follows:

1. Inclusion and representation
 - We believe that we should work in such a way that is both of and for our community. We will work hard to ensure that as an organisation we represent and reflect the diversity of London's communities in all aspects of our work.
2. Care for the environment
 - As global resources dwindle, and the pollution levels in London increase at an alarming pace, we will prioritise reducing our carbon footprint through our work, and encourage the care and understanding of the environment.
3. Early action
 - Whilst we know that we will always fund services at the acute end of the need, we will be a strong advocate for creating a society that acts earlier. We believe that in order to achieve this, we need to work with partners that have a strong commitment to learning, and have expertise and a successful track-record in the work that they do.
4. Working in ways that support Londoners, communities and sectors to come together
 - Fulfilling our vision relies on us working together with partners from across London and beyond in order to support the development of new and existing approaches. Successfully supporting people and communities that are marginalised and disadvantaged insists on people coming together, learning from each other and then effecting lasting change.
5. Being adaptive and creative, with a clear sense of purpose
 - We will commit to learning from our own work and that of others, in order to demonstrate and improve the impact that we are achieving through our work. We know that a creative approach by us as a funder will provide the people we support with more opportunities to thrive.

Our vision and mission will be the rationale behind why we do the work that we do, and if we feel we have strayed unnecessarily from this purpose then we will work together to return to this.

At CBT, we have been privileged to work with some amazing organisations that have affected massive positive changes for Londoners. We believe that great organisations do great work, and this is what we want to fund.

In order to make funding decisions, we will ask those applying for our funding how they live these values in their day-to-day work. We think that this approach will make us less transactional as a funder, and result in us working with the people who gain our funding or non-monetary support as our partners.

When this strategy is implemented we will detail in full what the values above mean to us. We don't expect that every one of our partners will express these values in the exact same way as us, and we know that sometimes the intentions

are there but it is hard to live your values if resources are scarce. Therefore, we will take that in to consideration in our assessments.

- **What CBT will fund**

CBT will be a proactive funder, meaning that we still intend to have clearly defined interests and priorities that we support, which we will promote in many different ways in order to ensure that London benefits from our funding. We want to work together with communities to find the best ideas, projects and organisations to support.

1. Place based funding

We want to help communities of place and interest throughout London to fund activities that are important to them; that help them to (re)build community assets; and in some cases even back projects that could result in positively and dramatically changing the prospects of a community long-term.

This funding could help to support great community engagement work, and champion those communities of active and engaged Londoners that work hard to ensure that all Londoners benefit from this great city.

We also know that there are many hidden and forgotten communities in London, and we are interested in funding and supporting them to become more empowered, so that they can be in charge of creating the differences they want to see and are given the tools to unlock their potential and creativity.

2. Addressing inequalities

The socio-economic and health inequalities experienced in London are well-known to many of the organisations we work with. London is a city where the richest and poorest can live side-by-side, without ever truly crossing paths. These inequalities are then exacerbated further for disadvantaged and marginalised communities in other parts of their lives, such as the well-documented examples of disabled people being less likely to gain employment or people from black and minority ethnic communities being more likely to have mental health issues, and not have access to the right services and support.

We are interested in exploring further the idea of funding projects that seek to bridge the divides that Londoners experience, and we want to back organisations that not only support people who are at the edges of our society, but those that help bring those people in to the centre of society too.

3. Transitions

We want to help Londoners to thrive, and in order for them to do this there are often a range of barriers to overcome. This priority considers funding projects that enable Londoners to make the transition in their life that is important to them. This could be a young person wanting to break out of the cycle of being

in and out of education or employment, to moving in to long-term and sustained employment. It could be support for a survivor of domestic abuse to leave their relationship and begin the journey of re-building their life.

We know that making successful transitions can be difficult, and often there are many other steps to take before a person can achieve their original goal. This requires organisations and communities to work together in the best interest of the person making the transition, because getting the right support does change lives.

4. Fairness and voice

Until we have representation at all levels, many assert a fair and equal society is near impossible to achieve. This funding priority looks at how best to support individuals and communities to develop voice, leadership and resilience. It also thinks about how to support ideas which will result in London being a city where everyone can thrive, and not the few, and where everyone has the rights to experience fairness.

We believe there are many ways to fulfil a fairer London through culture, environment, inclusion, participation, communities, public spaces and much more.

We know that there are likely to be a real diversity of ideas that we consider through the four headings above. As the strategy is developed, we expect that we may pull out certain themes and ideas that we want to explore more strategically too.

- **Funder ‘plus’ support and CBT’s toolbox**

We will commit to a funder ‘plus’ programme and a funding offer that shows a myriad of creative ways in which we will support our partners. This will include core funding, small grants, long-term grants, access to CBT’s cross-sectoral networks, consultancy support, exit strategy discussions etc. The support provided will be aligned to the priorities that we have outlined in our vision, mission, and values.

The exact details of the tools and approaches that we will use will be developed and shared with you as we develop and implement the next strategy.

- **CBT’s ambitions**

This strategy states the five key ambitions that we will commit to for the next five years, which can be summarised as making our processes as effective as they can be, working collaboratively, taking on leadership responsibilities, using all of our assets well, creating more giving, and encouraging learning between London, our regions, the UK and the world.

As the strategy evolves we will share examples of how we have achieved those ambitions, as well as working in partnership with others to consider new ways in which we could fulfil them.

- **A strategy that adapts and learns**

It is our privilege to be a funder, and we want to ensure that we are fulfilling the vision set out in this strategy by building in time to reflect on and learn from the work that we are doing.

Therefore, on an annual basis we will formally review our progress, with support from a range of internal and external partners. If we need to make some changes to our work then we will work with others to think about how best to do this.

City Bridge Trust - Funding Strategy, 2018-2023 [DRAFT ONE]

Bridging divides

CBT's vision and mission	CBT's values	What CBT will fund	Funder 'plus' support	CBT's toolbox	CBT's ambitions	A strategy that learns & adapts
<p>Our vision is that London should be a city where disadvantaged and marginalised individuals and communities are supported to not just survive, but to thrive too. We want to reduce the inequalities they face.</p> <p>Our mission is to use all of our knowledge, networks and assets to champion London's biggest asset - its people.</p> <p>As the City of London Corporation's charitable funder we are here to serve Londoners and the communities they connect to. We make these links directly, as well as through civil society, local, regional & national Government, the private sector and the wider funding ecology.</p> <p>By bridging the divides and differences that exist within London we know we can help to create a city that works for everyone.</p>	<p>We believe that for London to be a city that works for everyone, we must live the following values in our work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusion & representation 2. Care for the environment 3. Early action - creating a society that acts earlier 4. Working in ways that support Londoners, communities & sectors to come together 5. Being adaptive & creative, with a clear sense of purpose <p>We want to work with partners who share these values</p>	<p>As a funder working in London, we want to support great organisations, doing great work in pursuit of our vision, mission and values</p> <p>Our funding priorities/themes will be determined by the CBT Committee, and informed by a consultation process. We are considering these ideas at the moment:</p> <p>Funding well in a place</p> <p>Addressing inequalities</p> <p>Transitions</p> <p>Fairness & voice</p>	<p>In order to support our partners to be the best they can be, we will offer them all access to the following support:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training 2. Consultancy support 3. Networking & convening 4. Access to our cross-sectoral networks and partners 5. Support to develop partnerships 6. Organisational development support 7. Eco-audits 8. Exit strategy 	<p>These are the ways in which we will give our money away -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core funding 2. Small & large grants 3. Short & long term commitments 4. Ideas fund 5. Match funding 6. Access to giving 7. Strategic initiatives 8. Social Investment 9. Research & learning 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our processes will be fair, representative & proportionate. 2. We will work collaboratively with our partners; taking the lead when needed. 3. We will use all of our assets well to support Londoners. 4. We will encourage more & better giving for the benefit of Londoners. 5. We will encourage learning between London, our regions, the UK & the world. 	<p>Every year we will review if the approaches laid out in this strategy are working.</p> <p>We will be clear about the things we want to change, and the things we want to carry on doing.</p>

CBT's next steps

We want to work with internal and external stakeholders to develop the next versions of the strategy. In particular we are keen to co-create the ambitions that will sit beneath each of our funding streams, as well as gathering your views on how best to express our values. We will also be working with a range of partners to think about the most creative and straightforward ways in which we can develop our funder 'plus' and funding tools.

Please check our website to find out the ways in which we will engage you in these next steps.