

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London More Inclusive**Flying Gorillas****Amount requested: £75,000****Amount recommended: £75,000**

Adv: Shegufta Rahman
Base: Kensington & Chelsea
Benefit: Several West London Boroughs

The Charity

Flying Gorillas (FG) was set up in 2001 by professional dancers and musicians, primarily focussed on working with children and young people from disadvantaged communities to give them the opportunity to work with professional artists and produce high quality productions.

The Application

FG has a long established record of working with people with learning disabilities. Through its experience of working with people with learning disabilities, FG has found these individuals to have extraordinary talent in dance. The project will allow the charity to develop and formalise an approach it started in Hammersmith and Kensington by giving people with learning disabilities more involvement in the running and management of the dance programme.

The Recommendation

The charity is well-placed to develop this project with the evidence of need they have collected over the years and experience of working with people with learning disabilities. Over half of the total budget for this project has been secured from Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea (RBK&C), London Boroughs of Hammersmith & Fulham, Westminster, and EU funding. The request is for the balance.

£75,000 over three years (£27,500, £25,000, £22,500) towards the cost of sessional staff; workshop leaders, general manager and administrator, and associated project costs.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
28/04/2011	£58,500 over 3 years (£24,500; £19,500; £14,500) for an arts project for young people from Westway Travellers' site and local residents.

Background and detail of proposal

FG has found that people with learning disabilities are often uniquely placed to deepen the experience not only as artists, but also as teachers, through their different experiences and insights. Even those with no experience in dance often work in a way that is impressive and inspiring, using spontaneity, comic timing and an enviable lack of inhibition. FG has a long association with Wolfgang Stange and Amici Theatre Company. Stange is the leading international figure in the field of dance with people with learning disabilities and has been mentoring the founder of FG for 30 years. The organisation has performed in several Amici shows at Lyric Hammersmith and on tour.

Dance can provide a confidence boost for young people who struggle in mainstream subjects as they find themselves at the top of their class for the first time. People with learning disabilities often have fewer inhibitions, greater flexibility and better rhythm than their non-disabled peers, and sometimes have the upper hand in dance sessions. Focus groups run by FG found that art forms and activities like dance do not rely on language, making the project equally accessible to participants with English as an Additional Language and those who do not use language at all.

There are no special schools for children with learning disabilities in RBK&C, whilst teachers in Hammersmith and Westminster have reported that arts activities are a crucial element of learning and a very important part of the special curriculum but very few teachers have the confidence to run dance sessions. The project will also provide inspiring role models for disabled children and students, to share the experience with non-disabled children and teachers, and to share skills and networks with other organisations.

Financial Information

Cost of Raising Funds was reported as nil in 2015 due to relevant staff time and overheads not being apportioned to this category of spend. FG has advised such costs will be classified appropriately in the future and the draft 2016 figures have been amended to include this with an expectation of a similar level of costs being incurred in 2017, which is equivalent to 25% of the administrator's time.

FG did not specify a reserves policy target in 2015. It has now specified a target for both 2016 and 2017 at £30,000. A steady growth is forecast in both 2016 and 2017 to bring unrestricted reserves within this target, as well as in recognition of the uncertainty behind both local government funding, as well as that from the EU. The charity advises that the Trustees will review the reserves policy each year in line with these issues as they develop.

Year end as at 31st December	2015 Examined Accounts £	2016 Draft Accounts £	2017 Forecast £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	25,969	117,813	125,363
- % of Income confirmed	n/a	n/a	78%
Expenditure	(80,881)	(115,732)	(110,000)
Total surplus/(deficit)	(54,912)	2,081	15,363
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	0	0	0
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(54,912)	2,081	15,363
	(54,912)	2,081	15,363
Cost of Raising Funds	0	2,035	2,000
- % of income	0.0%	1.7%	1.6%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	54,912	29,718	25,481
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	11,542	13,623	28,986
No of months of operating expenditure	2.5	5.5	13.7
Reserves policy target	0	30,000	30,000
No of months of operating expenditure	0.0	12.1	14.1
Free reserves over/(under) target	11,542	(16,377)	(1,014)