

MEETING: 11/05/2017

Ref: 13757

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London More Inclusive

Volunteering Matters

Adv: Tim Wilson

Base: Hackney

Amount requested: £150,508

Benefit: Hackney

Amount recommended: £135,000

The Charity

Volunteering Matters (VM) was known as CSV until recently. The organisation facilitates opportunities for volunteering and social action across the UK in order to reduce inequalities, tackle isolation, and improve wellbeing. VM estimates that more than 35,000 volunteers participated in its programmes in 2015-16, many of whom benefited from improved confidence, skills and resilience.

The Application

VM seeks funding for an inclusion project supporting levels of voluntarism by young disabled people, and to support volunteer hosts to facilitate suitable placements. Working with those who have physical and learning disabilities the charity aims to provide 125 young people with volunteering and social action placements, support 225 young people to benefit from skill development workshops, offer 15 work experience placements and engage 100 organisations to provide accessible volunteering opportunities. The charity has experience of working in this field following its previous City Bridge Trust-funded project and some activity delivered outside Trust funding in Norfolk.

The Recommendation

The charity can start this project with strong relationships with young and disabled people's organisations in Hackney. Additionally, knowledge gathered through the 2010-funded City Bridge project has shaped this project. The work proposed in this request will involve peer volunteer mentors (an element missing in the previous grant) and VM believe this will increase the likelihood of successful project outcomes. The detailed work plan has been reviewed in light of the Trust's recent *Bridge to Work* initiative and is considered favourably. The charity initially requested a proportionately high contribution towards core costs and the recommendation reflects a sum consistent with the Trust's funding practice. Funding is advised as follows:

£135,000 over three years (3 x £45,000) for the salary, project delivery and support costs of an Inclusion Worker engaging young disabled people in volunteering.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
18/03/2010	£150,000 over three years towards the salary and related running costs of a volunteering project for young people with moderate learning disabilities making the transition to adulthood.

Background and detail of proposal

VM has developed this proposal based on its learning from the *Respect Us* project, which was funded by City Bridge Trust, as well as parallel initiatives in Wales and

Norfolk. The application presented to your Committee today is intended to bring the strongest elements of these projects together: working with people who are making a transition to adulthood; focusing on participant assets and capabilities; and involving volunteer mentors in service delivery. The charity also wants to develop the number of suitable volunteer host organisations which is likely to leave a legacy beyond the current application. VM is a member of Hackney's local business forum and expects to arrange host placements through this channel as well as through its existing network of corporate partners. Safeguarding for both young people and volunteer mentors has been built into the project design. The charity hopes to sustain the service after the end of any Trust grant through personal budgets.

Financial Information

VM incurred a significant deficit on unrestricted funds in 2015-16 as restructured, made an adjustment to its pension scheme and incurred costs preparing properties in Cardiff and Islington for sale. This left free reserves at a very low level and they are expected to remain below target until the Islington property is sold, for which the charity has set a target date of March 2018. Prudently, the charity has not included profit from this sale in the forecast provided for 2017-18 in case there is slippage.

Forecast income in the current year is £8,200,000 of which £6,700,000 (82%) has been confirmed as at April 2017. The charity has a pension liability of £2.7m which the trustees intend to repay over a 20 year term.

Year end as at 31 March	FY 2015-16 Audited Accounts £	FY 2016-17 Draft Accounts £	FY 2017-18 Forecast £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	7,079,000	7,290,000	8,200,000
- % of Income confirmed	n/a	100%	82%
Expenditure	8,996,000	7,150,000	8,150,000
Total surplus/(deficit)	(1,917,000)	140,000	50,000
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(161,000)	70,000	100,000
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(1,756,000)	70,000	(50,000)
	(1,917,000)	140,000	50,000
Cost of Raising Funds	279,000	250,000	260,000
- % of income	3.9%	3.4%	3.2%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	5,011,000	3,650,000	4,000,000
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	184,000	254,000	204,000
No of months of operating expenditure	0.4	0.8	0.6
Reserves policy target	2,505,500	1,825,000	2,000,000
No of months of operating expenditure	6.0	6.0	6.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(2,321,500)	(1,571,000)	(1,796,000)