

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Strengthening London's Voluntary Sector

Community Southwark

Adv: Jack Joslin

Base: Southwark

Amount requested: £99,950

Benefit: Southwark & Waltham Forest

Amount recommended: £100,000

The Charity

Community Southwark (CS), formerly Community Action Southwark (CAS), is the recognised umbrella organisation for the voluntary and community sector in both the London Boroughs of Southwark and Waltham Forest. CS has historically held a strategic position in Southwark and has a strong track record of partnership working with independent funders, statutory bodies and a wide range of voluntary organisations. In May 2015 CAS merged with Volunteer Centre Southwark to form CS. This merger has enabled the organisation to provide a wraparound service to the voluntary and community sector in Southwark offering capacity building services, providing influence and representation in local decision making and supporting social action. In November 2016 the charity was successful with a bid to deliver local infrastructure support services in Waltham forest and have established Community Waltham Forest (CWF).

The Application

CS has been delivering 'The Difference You Make' project, supported by the Trust, since July 2014. The project is coming to the end of its third year and the Charity is requesting two years' continuation of the programme. The project is focused on improving the capabilities of Voluntary and Community organisations (VCO) on how they demonstrate their impact. The application is requesting continued support for the Outcomes Framework Development Officer and associated running costs for two more years as they see this project having strategic importance for the voluntary sector in Southwark. Since funding was originally awarded CS has now expanded their delivery into Waltham Forest. This application is requesting that 20% of the project is now delivered to VCOs in Waltham Forest, expanding the remit and reach.

The Recommendation

CS is a well-established infrastructure organisation who has a strong track record of delivery in Southwark. Your funding is sought to provide two additional years to 'The Difference You Make' project. Whilst three years is the maximum period that you will usually fund a particular project or activity within an organisation, your policies allow you to consider funding work considered to be of strategic importance to London for a further two years. Borough infrastructure support organisations fall within this categorisation. The work to date has been of a consistently good standard and the project will have additional benefit as it expands the provision in Waltham Forest. Funding for a further two years is recommended as follows:

£100,000 over two years (£50,000; £50,000) for the salary of a Full Time (35hpw) Outcomes Framework Development Officer and associated running costs to deliver a monitoring and evaluation programme in Southwark and Waltham Forest.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
24/05/2016	£4,000 Strategic Initiative for research to inform the development of Southwark Giving.
10/04/2014	£146,900 over three years towards a full-time (35 hours per week) Outcomes Framework Development Officer and running costs for CAS's monitoring and evaluation support programme.
15/03/2012	£85,500 over two final years towards the salary and associated costs of the Volunteer Development project.
08/07/2008	£120,000 over three years for the salary and related costs of promoting good volunteering practice in Southwark.

Background and detail of proposal

'The Difference You Make' has been running since July 2014 providing a service to VCOs to improve their capabilities on demonstrating their impact. CS provides a mixed approach of training and one to one intensive support to organisations helping them to better identify and articulate their outcomes for the local community. The project has had success so far and reporting on the current grant has been strong. The Development Officer works with individual organisations to build their capacity and capabilities and implement monitoring and evaluation frameworks. They work with VCOs to self-manage their outcomes and self-assessment systems which can often require long-term and ongoing support. This expansion of the work is well reasoned in mind of the organisations expansion into another borough and will complement the service they can offer in Waltham Forest.

Financial Information

The Charity relies heavily on income from statutory contracts; they received a contract from Southwark Council for 3 years in April 2016 with an option of a two year extension and a 3 year contract from Waltham Forest in November 2016 to deliver infrastructure support services.

Growth is anticipated by the Charity in 2017/18 as they foresee a number of new opportunities Southwark and a number of new consultancy opportunities.

Year end as at 31st March	FY 15/16 Audited Accounts £	FY 16/17 Draft Accounts £	FY 17/18 Forecast £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	1,382,470	1,191,375	1,512,127
- % of Income confirmed	n/a	n/a	77%
Expenditure	(1,389,084)	(1,306,375)	(1,504,303)
Total surplus/(deficit)	(6,614)	(115,000)	7,824
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	21,295	(26,950)	0
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(27,909)	(88,050)	(7,824)
	(6,614)	(115,000)	(7,824)
Cost of Raising Funds	0	8,884	13,190
- % of income	0.0%	0.7%	0.9%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	792,288	233,377	177,626
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	342,089	254,039	246,215
No of months of operating expenditure	5.2	13.1	16.6
Reserves policy target	285,673	58,344	44,406
No of months of operating expenditure	4.3	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	56,416	195,695	201,809