

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Offenders**Working Chance****Adv: Shegufta Rahman****Base: Islington****Amount requested: £157,958****Benefit: London-wide****Amount recommended: £117,000****The Charity**

Registered in 2009, Working Chance (WC) is the UK's only recruitment consultancy for women with criminal convictions and young women care leavers at risk of offending. Providing specialist employment services to women in prison, on probation and out in the community, WC helps individuals cross the social divide from a life of exclusion to one of contribution. Based in Islington, the charity recently launched two satellite offices working out of HMP Downview and Manchester.

The Application

WC recognises the talent amongst women with criminal convictions and has an organisational model demonstrating this; 60% of staff have criminal convictions. WC is seeking funding for a Trainee Recruitment Coach for the first year, with a view to the post graduating into a Recruitment Coach in years two and three. This post will be filled by a woman with a criminal conviction and forms part of the London team, aiming to support nearly 700 women into paid work over the three year period.

The Recommendation

WC has shown significant growth and success in its eight years of supporting women with criminal convictions into paid work. The amount recommended is less than that requested as usually you do not fund more than one FTE post (see Appendix 1 to application) – although a reasonable contribution to core costs has been maintained.

£117,000 over three years (£35,000, £40,500, £41,500) for one FT Recruitment Coach and associated project costs for work with Londoners.

Funding History

| Meeting Date | Decision |
|--------------|---|
| 28/01/2016 | Application withdrawn as was made during fallow period. |

Background and detail of proposal

Women with criminal convictions face a wide swathe of gender-specific challenges which prevent them from finding stable employment. 46% of women in prison report having suffered a history of self-harm in prison, despite only representing 5% of the prison population. Employment outcomes for women following short prison sentences are three times worse than for men – only 8.5% of women, not in receipt of specialist employment support services, report a positive job outcome within a year of release, compared with 26% of men.

Over the last eight years, WC has placed 875 women into paid work, and 458 into voluntary work, achieving a sustainability rate of 82% of women remaining in their job for six months or longer. Employment is proven to be a critical factor in reducing reoffending. The reoffending rate for women supported by WC is less than 5%, compared with the national average of 45% for women leaving prison. As well as working towards creating safer communities, the charity's work is creating significant

savings to the taxpayer, with the average cost of keeping a woman in prison averaging £40,000 a year. There are additional financial benefits to local economies, employment rates, and costs associated with any children that may be placed into foster care.

The charity has piloted the Trainee Recruitment Coach post with significant success in the past. In 2012 it recruited its first serving offender, who rose from volunteer to: Trainee Recruitment Coach; Recruitment Coach; Senior Recruitment Coach; Recruitment Manager, before most recently being responsible for opening the pilot Manchester office which has been operational since August 2016. As well as the positive impact on the recruited individual herself, the post will be crucial to the growth in the number of women supported by WC into paid jobs. Having placed nearly 900 women into paid roles in eight years, the charity is hoping to place another 700 in London over the three year grant period. As a previous Lord Mayor's Appeal charity, two candidates from WC went on to work in that Lord Mayor's Office.

Financial Information

During the past Lord Mayor Fiona Woolf's term (2013/14), WC was chosen as one of the Lord Mayor's Appeal charities. In 2014/15, the charity received £320,000 from the Appeal; a major contribution to its 50% increase in income from the previous year. This accounts for the significant level of free reserves held in year end to 2016. Some of this funding was utilised to grow and to deal with the impact of HMP Holloway closing, as well as a significant proportion designated for WC's 10 year anniversary in 2019. WC has confirmed that trustees will re-evaluate the total designated funds and consider transferring a sum into free unrestricted reserves, aligning to its reserves policy, having held a substantial amount designated and therefore not counted as part of free reserves, in error.

WC has a strategic plan for growing its Partnerships Programme as an alternative source and diversification of its income. Designing, securing and delivering bespoke packages to Corporates to become Silver, Gold or Platinum Members in order to mentor candidates, volunteer and work in prisons; all of which meets Corporate Social Responsibility, diversity and inclusion targets. Current Members include Virgin Media, Black Rock, Carpetright and Bank of Tokyo.

| Year end as at 31 August | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|------------------|------------------|--------------|
| | Audited Accounts | Forecast | Budget |
| | £ | £ | £ |
| Income & expenditure: | | | |
| Income | 996,405 | 919,475 | 860,159 |
| - % of Income confirmed as at 04/07/2017 | n/a | 81% | 36% |
| Expenditure | (961,767) | (1,249,231) | (856,808) |
| Total surplus/(deficit) | 34,638 | (329,756) | 3,351 |
| Split between: | | | |
| - Restricted surplus/(deficit) | (29,134) | 13,333 | 39,000 |
| - Unrestricted surplus/(deficit) | 63,772 | (343,089) | (35,649) |
| | 34,638 | (329,756) | 3,351 |
| Cost of Raising Funds | 17,610 | 49,075 | 23,000 |
| - % of income | 1.8% | 5.3% | 2.7% |
| Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds) | 324,517 | 681,084 | 618,441 |
| Free unrestricted reserves: | | | |
| Free unrestricted reserves held at year end | 404,462 | 74,706 | 78,057 |
| No of months of operating expenditure | 15.0 | 1.3 | 1.5 |
| Reserves policy target | 81,129 | 170,271 | 154,610 |
| No of months of operating expenditure | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Free reserves over/(under) target | 323,333 | (95,565) | (76,553) |