

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Strengthening London's Voluntary Sector**Small Charities Coalition****Adv: Tim Wilson****Base: Lambeth****Amount requested: £100,164****Benefit: London-wide****Amount recommended: £100,000****The Charity**

Established in 2007 to address the lack of support available for smaller organisations, the Small Charities Coalition (SCC) has over 8,000 members across the UK, 35% of which are London-based. 'Small' is defined as an annual income of less than £1m. SCC provides a first point of contact service for people starting new charities, opportunities for networking and guidance across a wide-range of support needs. This is achieved with relatively few staff as SCC works in collaboration with larger charities, corporates, and individual mentors to broker tailored support. SCC is about to launch a new strategy to expand membership and deliver assistance via an online portal. There are approximately 160,000 registered charities with annual turnover of less than £1m, and a further 600,000 micro charities with turnover below £5k that are below the mandatory threshold for registration, so there is considerable capacity for expansion. SCC charges no membership fee.

The Application

City Bridge Trust has funded SCC's *Building Resilience* programme in London since 2012 and it is a continuation of this scheme which is subject to today's request. With a core focus on governance capabilities, *Building Resilience* looks at the elements of a successful organisation and provides opportunities to strengthen financial skills, monitoring, collaborative working and trustee recruitment. During its previous three years of operations the programme reached over 2,000 beneficiaries through events, mentoring, telephone helpline, email support and the provision of online information.

With further Trust support SCC plans to deliver 118 events for over 1,400 people, support 86 mentoring matches and approximately 500 queries. SCC has expanded its mentoring network since it was first funded, and plans to manage a greater volume of support provision as a result of a new online portal.

The Recommendation

SCC is a well-regarded organisation with a strong network of support-providers from the private and third sectors. The previous award was well reported. The charity has recently changed CEO, and seen several new trustees join the board. It is managing this period well, and it is anticipated that, with the launch of the new online portal as well as a push to expand membership, SCC will become an even more influential organisation in coming months. Funding is advised as follows:

£100,000 over two years (2 x £50,000) for the delivery of the Building Resilience programme by Small Charities Coalition in London.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
31/05/2012	£142,000 over three years towards the costs of the 'Building Resilience' programme.

Background and detail of proposal

Among the findings of SCC's recent membership survey was the time and financial constraints that many smaller organisations face when they wish to learn. On average, a typical member reported they had only £300 - £500 to spend on training each year across their entire organisation. SCC notes continued demand for the free, personalised support offered through *Building Resilience*. The organisation is planning for continued delivery after the next two years through increased engagement with corporate partners.

Financial Information

SCC has set an ambitious income target for 2017-18 which would build unrestricted reserves to just over 11 months' worth of operating expenditure by year end. This is the responsibility of the charity's new CEO (who has a background in fundraising) and will see a new focus on income diversification through targeting new corporate partners. If the forecast is realised, SCC plans to use the additional free reserves to help manage the costs of its new online portal, membership growth, and the development of new services. 2017-18 will be a 10 months due to a planned change in SCC's financial year end.

Year end as at 31 May	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18
	Examined Accounts	Draft accounts	10 month forecast
	£	£	£
Income & expenditure:			
Income	173,006	313,014	331,722
- % of Income confirmed	n/a	n/a	60%
Expenditure	154,184	269,016	240,043
Total surplus/(deficit)	18,822	43,998	91,679
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	11,346	52,096	48,521
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	7,476	(8,098)	43,158
	18,822	43,998	91,679
Cost of Raising Funds	13,200	25,995	20,425
- % of income	7.6%	8.3%	6.2%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	40,179	147,186	124,822
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	81,041	72,943	116,101
No of months of operating expenditure	24.2	5.9	11.2
Reserves policy target	20,090	73,593	62,411
No of months of operating expenditure	6	6	6
Free reserves over/(under) target	60,951	(650)	53,690