

MEETING: 14/03/2018

Ref: 14399

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London More Inclusive

Rethink Mental Illness

Adv: Julia Mirkin

Amount requested: £132,909

Base: Lambeth

Benefit: London-wide

Amount recommended: £113,000

The Applicant

Rethink Mental Illness (RMI), formerly called The National Schizophrenia Fellowship, was founded in 1972. RMI's mission is to lead the way to a better quality of life for everyone affected by mental illness. It offers a range of services including: housing, crisis accommodation, residential care, advocacy, carers' support, employment, psychological support and some criminal justice services.

The Application

A programme of peer support for university students experiencing mental ill-health, co-devised and co-delivered by young people with lived experience of mental illness.

The Recommendation

RMI is a leader in co-production in the mental health sector and will draw on the successful Step Up programme to develop Step UP University (SUU). It is recognised that co-production and working with the targeted user group is staff-intensive. However, it was your officer's opinion that the original request had been over-costed. The revised request draws more heavily on salaried staff, reducing the fees budgeted for agency staff; less is budgeted for management and the cost of training materials has reduced as work has already started, building on what already exists. Finally, since the application was submitted, alternative funds have been secured for the external evaluation, reducing the amount requested from CBT.

£113,000 over two years (£53,000; £60,000) towards the Step Up into University London Project Manager salary, SUU project costs, evaluation and on costs.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
10/01/2013	£39,000 for a third year's support of a p/t (3dpw) Young People's Officer plus related activity costs for the Uthink London project.

Background and detail of proposal

SUU is a targeted expansion of RMI's Step Up programme, currently funded by the Big Lottery. Whereas Step Up has focussed on the 16-18 age-group, SUU will target university students. The programme's content and materials will be devised to meet the needs of university students through a process of consultation and development with RMI's young Champions, young volunteers with lived experience of mental ill health, who will also be trained to take on co-delivery roles.

The programme does not seek to replace university welfare provision – which as a minimum is legislated through compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; the Equalities Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998 - or indeed mental health services offered through the NHS; it is hoped that SUU will offer a complementary source of support, helping students to learn about mental illness; become skilled at managing their mental wellbeing and connecting with support networks in their new university setting.

Data from 2014-15 academic year, compiled by The Higher Education Statistics Agency, shows that 87,914 students requested counselling in 2015-16 compared with 68,614 in 2014-15, a rise of 28%. Increased instances of mental ill health at university is partly attributed to efforts to broaden access, which have led to higher numbers of students entering higher education with diagnosed mental ill health. It is anticipated that six distinct packages will be developed to address the needs identified during the programme's scoping stage.

Co-production is at the heart of RMI's work, building on a belief that people affected by mental ill health should be empowered to take active roles in their care and have a valuable contribution to make towards shaping programmes that support others. Although largely informed through consultation and co-production, it is anticipated, at this stage, that the issues addressed will include: transferring to mental health services in a new area; withdrawal of financial support; economic downturn and competition for employment; increased family breakdown and coming out.

Financial Information

Traditionally, a high proportion of RMI's income has come from statutory sources, which has exposed it to public sector funding cuts and resulted in deficits on unrestricted funds. In response, RMI has made efficiency savings to reduce operational expenditure and has continued to invest in fundraising. Deficits on unrestricted funds are forecast to fall over the next two years. The current calculation of free unrestricted reserves only includes fixed asset investments that can be realised immediately. In addition, RMI holds £6.52m in shares, 95% of which could be accessed within seven days and has provision for pension and building work liabilities, to which it contributes £304k annually.

Year end as at 31 March	2017 Audited Accounts £	2018 Forecast £	2019 Budget £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	33,717,000	32,009,000	30,300,000
- % of income confirmed as at 09/02/18	n/a	73.19%	94%
Expenditure	(34,266,000)	(33,099,000)	(30,600,000)
Total surplus/(deficit)	(549,000)	(1,090,000)	(300,000)
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(311,000)	(149,000)	(100,000)
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(238,000)	(941,000)	(200,000)
	(549,000)	(1,090,000)	(300,000)
Cost of Raising Funds	1,263,000	1,100,000	1,200,000
- % of income	3.7%	3.4%	4.0%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	30,895,000	27,953,000	25,700,000
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	3,506,000	2,565,000	2,365,000
No of months of operating expenditure	1.4	1.1	1.1
Reserves policy target	4,800,000	4,800,000	4,800,000
No of months of operating expenditure	1.9	2.1	2.2
Free reserves over/(under) target	(1,294,000)	(2,235,000)	(2,435,000)