

The City Bridge Trust

Investing In Londoners: Application for a grant



About your organisation

Name of your organisation: Release Legal Emergency and Drugs Service Ltd	
If your organisation is part of a larger organisation, what is its name?	
In which London Borough is your organisation based? Islington	
Contact person: Ms Niamh Eastwood	Position: Executive Director
Website: http://www.release.org.uk	
Legal status of organisation: Registered Charity	Charity, Charitable Incorporated Company or company number: 801118
When was your organisation established? 01/11/1967	

Grant Request

Under which of City Bridge Trust's programmes are you applying? Reducing Poverty		
Which of the programme outcome(s) does your application aim to achieve? More people accessing debt and legal services More Londoners with improved economic circumstances		
Please describe the purpose of your funding request in one sentence. Funding for a full time solicitor to provide housing, debt and welfare representation through Release's community legal service targeting vulnerable adults.		
When will the funding be required? 02/04/2018		
How much funding are you requesting?		
Year 1: £43,500	Year 2: £45,500	Year 3: £46,750
Total: £135,750		

Aims of your organisation:

Release is the UK centre of expertise on drugs and drug laws. Through the provision of expert drug advice and legal services we seek to reduce the harms faced by people who use drugs or who are affected negatively by drug laws. Our community legal service is targeted specifically at people who suffer from or have a history of addiction, or who are involved in sex work, and where poverty and stigmatisation are inevitably intertwined with their legal problems. Release campaigns directly on issues that impact on our clients - it is their experiences that drive the policy work that the organisation does and why we advocate for evidence-based drug policies that are founded on principles of public health rather than a criminal justice approach. Release believes in a just and fair society where drug policies reduce the harms associated with drugs, and where those who use drugs are treated based on principles of human rights, dignity and equality.

Main activities of your organisation:

? Community legal outreach service -based in seven sites across London, and supporting over 1200 people annually, the service seeks to address a range of social welfare legal issues.

? National Helpline ?operates for 20 hours a week, receiving approximately 5000 queries a year. Advice is sought on a myriad of matters including drugs and the criminal law, police complaints and harm reduction advice.

? Youth programme (?Y.Stop?) ?Y-Stop seeks to empower marginalised young people (especially young people of colour) to cope with police stop and searches in a way that reduces the risk of the interaction escalating.

? Counselling service ?an outreach counselling service provided to people with drug and alcohol problems.

? Policy and advocacy ?Release undertakes primary and secondary research analysing the impact of laws and policies on people who use drugs both within the criminal justice and health spheres. This research, and the client?s experiences, are used as a basis for our advocacy work.

Number of staff

Full-time:	Part-time:	Management committee members:	Active volunteers:
10	2	12	10

Property occupied by your organisation

Is the main property owned, leased or rented by your organisation?	If leased/rented, how long is the outstanding agreement?
Leased	9 months

Summary of grant request

People who use drugs problematically are a hidden population, experiencing marginalisation and stigmatisation. They often face a myriad of legal problems driven by their drug use and the deprivation they experience. The provision of legal services to this vulnerable group can be key to engagement with formal treatment settings and stabilisation or cessation of drug use. There are an estimated 52,000 to 67,000 opiate and crack cocaine users in London. Public Health England has reported that 30% of those who presented to treatment for opiate dependency had a housing problem. In 2017 of those accessing our legal services 48% presented with housing difficulties (14% homeless); 62% had benefit problems; and 24% had debt issues.

The outreach service would be delivered in three sites and managed by a full time solicitor. The solicitor would attend a site for four hours a week seeing a total of eight clients at each project. The sites will operate in boroughs with high levels of drug use and/or deprivation - the following services have agreed to host the service: Connections at St Martin's on the Field (Westminster); Change Grow Live (Waltham Forest) and Reset (Tower Hamlets). All follow up work is undertaken at the office. The type of service provided will include casework and representation on debt, housing and welfare issues.

The aim of this work is to ensure that people who use drugs problematically have their legal rights realised and their economic circumstances improved. The vast majority of people who are dependent on heroin and/or crack cocaine have suffered some trauma - physical or sexual abuse, bereavement, abandonment - or have mental health problems. By providing outreach legal services, we are meeting people where they are at, ensuring that the service is accessible and supportive of their needs. By resolving clients' legal problems, through the provision of debt and legal services, they experience improved housing security and better economic circumstances. Ultimately, the resolution of such problems can bring stability to an individual's life, giving them greater control over their substance use and, potentially, lead to better engagement with services.

Release has been providing legal services to people who use drugs for over 50 years and has a positive reputation amongst those who access our services. Clients accessing our services know that we promote policies that seek to improve treatment services, enhance harm reduction approaches and end the criminalisation of people who use drugs. Our legal team are well versed in issues specific to our clients and have an understanding of legislation that impact directly on those we work with.

The delivery of this work will undoubtedly improve the economic circumstances of not only those clients directly accessing our service but also their families. In the last twelve months we have recorded over £170,000 of financial outcomes for clients this includes debts written off, income benefits secured, and rent arrears being extinguished.

Service users are involved in all aspects of our work: a member of the Release Board is a former service user; we provide volunteering opportunities for current and ex-service users; and consult with service user groups at projects where we work to ensure that the service we provide is meeting their needs. Release is fully committed to equal opportunities. Volunteers all receive induction and ongoing training, as well as being provided with opportunities to network with external partners (we have assisted legal volunteers in securing placements at law firms and chambers). We work actively to reduce our carbon footprint with all recyclable materials recycled (report available if required), file digitisation, and using suppliers who have committed to green policies including renewable energy providers.

If you need any planning or other statutory consents for the project to proceed, what stage have the applications reached?

Do you have a Vulnerable Adults policy? **Yes**

What Quality Marks does your organisation currently hold?

Release holds the 'Advice Quality Standard' awarded by Recognising Excellence. Release is also recognised as a 'Centre of Excellence' by the London Legal Support Trust, an award we have held for the last three years.

Outputs and outcomes

What are the main activities or outputs you want to deliver? Please include no more than 5. By activities or outputs we mean the services, products or facilities you plan to deliver. If you plan to deliver work over more than one year you should include activities over the full grant period requested. Try to be specific.

Three legal clinics provided a week. Two based in drug services in Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest and one in Westminster at a centre for homeless people. The service will see up to 24 people a week, with at least 1080 people accessing legal and debt services over the grant period.

Debt advice and representation provided to at least 405 people over the three year grant period.

Housing advice and representation provided to at least 600 people over the grant period.

At least 105 people who are street homeless receive support to secure stable housing.

Benefit advice and representation provided to 510 people over the period of the grant.

What main differences or outcomes do you hope the activities you have described above will achieve? Please include no more than 5. By differences or outcomes we mean the changes, benefits, learning or other effects that result from the work your project would deliver. These might be for individuals, families, communities or the environment.

Individuals accessing the community legal welfare services will experience an increase in their income, leading to an improvement in their economic well-being.

Individuals accessing the community legal welfare service will have improved housing security.

People who use drugs problematically will be able to address their substance use and experience improvement in their lives and overall health and well-being.

Risk of relapse reduced due to accessing the community legal welfare service.

Do you plan to continue the activity beyond the period for which you are requesting funding? If so, how do you intend to sustain it? If not, what is your exit strategy?

Through significant evaluation of the community legal outreach service we will aim to evidence both the cost benefit of the service locally and the social, health and economic benefits to the beneficiaries of the service. This will be used as a basis to secure funding through local authority grants and/ or from the host drug treatment projects.

Who will benefit?

About your beneficiaries

How many people will benefit directly from the grant per year?

360

In which Greater London borough(s) or areas of London will your beneficiaries live?

Hackney (33%)

Tower Hamlets (33%)

Westminster (34%)

What age group(s) will benefit?

16-24

25-44

45-64

65-74

75 and over

What gender will beneficiaries be?

All

What will the ethnic grouping(s) of the beneficiaries be?

A range of ethnic groups

If Other ethnic group, please give details:

What proportion of the beneficiaries will be disabled people?

61-70%

Funding required for the project

What is the total cost of the proposed activity/project?

Expenditure heading	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Solicitor's Salary (FT)	33,106	34,196	35,093	102,395
Employers National Insurance	3,407	3,557	3,681	10,645
Employers Pension Contribution	662	1,026	1,053	2,741
Support Costs (professional fees; insurance; office)	6,325	6,721	6,923	19,969
TOTAL:	43,500	45,500	46,750	135,750

What income has already been raised?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:	0	0	0	0

What other funders are currently considering the proposal?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:	0	0	0	0

How much is requested from the Trust?

Expenditure heading	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
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Finance details

Please complete using your most recent audited or independently examined accounts.

Financial year ended:	Month: March	Year: 2017
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Income received from:	£
Voluntary Income	389,281
Activities for generating funds	189,505
Investment Income	129
Income from charitable activities	
Other sources	0
Total Income:	578,915

Expenditure:	£
Charitable activities	571,798
Governance costs	12,698
Cost of generating funds	15,909
Other	0
Total Expenditure:	600,405
Net (deficit)/surplus:	-21,490
Other Recognised Gains/(Losses):	0
Net Movement in Funds:	-21,490

Asset position at year end	£
Fixed assets	1,740
Investments	0
Net current assets	212,045
Long-term liabilities	24,834
*Total Assets (A):	188,951

Reserves at year end	£
Restricted funds	101,465
Endowment Funds	0
Unrestricted funds	87,486
*Total Reserves (B):	188,951

*** Please note that total Assets (A) and Total Reserves (B) should be the same.**

Statutory funding

For your most recent financial year, what % of your income was from statutory sources?
1-10%

Organisational changes

Describe any significant changes to your structure, financial position or core activities since the date of your most recent accounts:

N/A however we will be relocating to new office premises in the summer of 2018 as our current lease comes to an end and the proposed rent increase is unaffordable.

Previous funding received

Please list the funding received by your organisation from the following statutory sources during the last THREE years.

	Year 3 £	Year 2 £	Most recent £
City of London (except City Bridge Trust)	0	0	0
London Local Authorities	14,000	14,000	0
London Councils	0	0	0
Health Authorities	32,200	38,300	47,300
Central Government departments	0	0	0
Other statutory bodies	0	0	0

Previous grants received

Please list the grants received by your organisation from charitable trusts and foundations (other than City Bridge Trust) during the last THREE years. List source, years and annual amounts. Please include the 5 largest only.

Name of Funder	Year 3 £	Year 2 £	Most recent £
Open Society Foundation	259,677	265,450	124,980
Esmee Fairbairn	70,000	40,000	50,000
Big Lottery Fund	34,210	46,969	47,719
Legal Education Foundation	0	42,000	44,177
Trust for London	30,000	37,500	0

Declaration

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, all the information I have provided in this application form is correct. I fully understand that City Bridge Trust has zero tolerance towards fraud and will seek to prosecute and recover funds in every instance.

Please confirm: Yes Full Name: **Niamh Eastwood**

Role within **Executive Director**
Organisation: