

The City Bridge Trust

Bridging Divides: Application for a grant



About your organisation

Organisation Details

Name of your organisation: Legal Education Foundation	
If your organisation is part of a larger organisation, what is its name?	
In which London Borough is your organisation based? Outside London	
Contact person: Mr Matthew Smerdon	Position: Chief Executive
Website: www.thelegaleducationfoundation.org	Social Media Accounts: @The_LEF
What Quality Marks does your organisation currently hold? N/A	

Legal Status

Legal status of organisation: Registered Charity			
Charity Number: 271297	Company Number: RC000126	CIC Number:	Bencom Number:
When was your organisation established? 24/05/1975			
Aims of your organisation: To promote the advancement of legal education and the study of law in all its branches.			

Main activities of your organisation:

We support all areas of legal education to advance the following objectives:

1. To increase public understanding of the law and the capability to use it.

We want to support people of all ages to build broader legal knowledge and capability. Helping people to learn about when problems may have a law-related solution and securing help to do so means that beneficial opportunities to use the law are not missed

2. To advance high quality thinking, training and practice in legal education and legal services so as to ensure legal needs are met.

We want to support work that explores effective ways of meeting legal needs in sustainable ways and at scale.

Your Staff & Volunteers

Full-time:	Part-time:	Trustee/Board members:	Active volunteers:
10	4	10	0

Do you have a Safeguarding policy? **No**

Are the following people in your organisation subject to DBS checks?

Paid Staff No	Volunteers No	Trustees / Management Committee Members No
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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	

Environmental Impact**What action have you taken in the past year to progress environmentally sustainability principles and practice?**

We have not taken any specific action in the past year.

Finance Details

Organisation Finances

	Year of most recent audited / examined accounts	Current financial year forecast	Next financial year budget
End of financial year date	30/06/2018	30/06/2019	30/06/2020
Grants & donations:	£619,000	£0	£0
Earned income:	£0	£0	£0
Other income:	£3,962,000	£7,350,000	£7,700,000
Total income:	4,581,000	£7,350,000	£7,700,000
Charitable activity costs:	£7,092,000	£7,219,000	£7,569,000
Cost of raising funds:	£151,000	£131,000	£131,000
Other costs:	£2,469,000	£0	£0
Total expenditure:	£9,712,000	£7,350,000	£7,700,000
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end:	£252,226,000	£262,919,000	£272,103,000
What is your organisation's reserves policy?			
<p>It is the Governors' policy to maintain the Capital Fund at £200 million in real terms based on 30th November 2012 and for the Fund to provide a sustainable amount for grant and operational expenditure purposes each year over the long term.</p> <p>Based on the value of the Capital Fund at 31st January 2018 the Governors approved a total grant and operational expenditure budget of £7.35 million for the year to 30th June 2019.</p>			
<p>For your most recent financial year, what % of your income was from statutory sources?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0%</p>			

Organisational changes

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

None

Grant Request

Which of the Trust's programmes and priority areas will your application deliver? Advice and Support/Provision of advice and support				
Which of the programme outcome(s) does your application aim to achieve?				
Please describe the purpose of your funding request in one sentence. Co-fund with TLEF six Justice First Fellows based in social welfare advice agencies in London where they will meet legal needs and build skills for a career in this field.				
When will the funding be required? 01/01/2020				
Is this request to continue work that is currently funded or has been funded in the last year by:				
City Bridge Trust?		Another funder? (if so which)		
No		Principally TLEF which contributes £1m / year from our own resources; plus		
How much funding are you requesting?				
Year 1:	Year 2:	Year 3:	Year 4:	Year 5:
£80,000	£160,000	£80,000	£0	£0
Total Requested: £320,000				

What 3 main differences or outcomes do you want to achieve through your funding proposal?

Increased provision of social welfare legal advice to disadvantaged people in London over two years through the creation of six new posts in specialist social welfare agencies. The agencies will be drawn from the London Legal Support Trust's Centres of Excellence programme.

Longer term increases in the availability of specialist social welfare legal services in London through six Fellows completing their training and going on to establish sustainable careers using law to bring about improvements for disadvantaged groups.

The Justice First Fellowship scheme will continue to grow and support the next generation of specialists in the field of social welfare law, enabling ongoing delivery of services and development of the sector so that it can continue to meet social welfare legal needs.

What are the main activities or outputs you will deliver to achieve these differences?

Six specialist social welfare organisations, that have secured London Legal Support Trust Centres of Excellence status, will be selected through open application to host a Justice First Fellow.

Six Justice First Fellows will be recruited, via open application, and deployed full time for two years in host organisations to deliver social welfare advice to 1200 disadvantaged people and, in so doing, meet the requirements for completing compulsory training to qualify as a solicitor.

An additional programme of training, support and development activities will be delivered to support Fellows to develop the wider non-legal skills necessary to meet social welfare legal needs effectively and sustainably.

You and your grant request

What, specifically, are you applying for (your project)?

We are applying to co-fund with City Bridge Trust six new Justice First Fellows (JFFs) to be based in specialist social welfare legal agencies in London. These JFFs will join an expanding number of Fellows across the UK (currently 68) who spend two years in host agencies delivering much needed legal services to disadvantaged groups in the course of meeting the requirements to complete their compulsory training ("the training contract") and qualify as a solicitor. Alongside this service provision, Fellows also develop a project that advances access to justice. This is an essential additional element of the Fellowship, offering the opportunity to deliver valuable services at the same time as developing the non-legal skills needed to go on after the scheme to use the law to bring about positive outcomes effectively and sustainably. Projects have attracted income that have enabled Fellows to stay on in their host organisation.

How will the project described achieve your stated outcomes?

We will recruit six specialist social welfare organisations via a competitive open application process. A qualifying criteria will be that agencies are Centres of Excellence under the London Legal Support Trust's scheme (created with support from CBT). Six JFFs will then be recruited, also via a competitive open application process, to be based in these agencies. Fellows will deliver services, develop an access to justice project and receive wider training all designed to ensure that they are well placed to continue using the law as a tool to bring about positive outcomes for people. CBT has previously partnered with TLEF to co-fund six Fellows in London agencies. We will work with CBT staff to identify key London agencies where a Fellow would be most useful. This contributes to a wider additional benefit of the scheme in strengthening advice organisations and the wider infrastructure for social welfare advice in London.

How do you know there's a need for this work?

Welfare reform, changes to legal aid and pressure on local authority budgets has put huge stress on the ability of specialist social welfare law agencies to meet legal needs across the country, including London. The visible daily experience of Londoners, supported by numerous research studies, shows the significant effects of these changes on disadvantaged groups including women (especially those experiencing domestic violence), older people, disabled people and carers, Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic people, children and young people. Another implication is that opportunities for the next generation of social justice lawyers to complete their compulsory training had virtually collapsed. This matters in the short term because fewer services are available but, in the longer term, the legal advice sector needs new specialists coming through to deliver and develop the service and funding models that are needed to ensure the sector is effective and sustainable.

How will the work be delivered - specifically, what will you do?

TLEF runs the Fellowship scheme to bring through this next generation. We will work with CBT staff to identify key London agencies that could act as host organisations. We will recruit these organisations. The selected host organisations then recruit the Fellows. We will deliver the wider training and development opportunities aimed at helping Fellows to develop the wider non-legal skills necessary to establish effective and sustainable services in the longer term. We will continue to attract co-funding for the scheme from other grant making trusts, City law firms and local Law Societies. Selected host organisations are awarded a grant of on average 80000 GBP over two years to cover the full salary of the Fellow (set by the host in line with their own salary structures), the cost of supervision and a contribution to overheads.

Why are you the right organisation to do this work?

The Foundation focuses on the role of legal education in helping people to understand and use the law. We recognise that law is important tool for bringing about positive wider outcomes, from securing shelter and income to improving physical and mental health. We saw that the collapse in the ability of the social welfare legal sector to offer training contracts meant that talented lawyers with a sense of social justice and a commitment to using the law as a tool for positive change were not be able to train in the areas of social welfare law where help is so desperately needed and on such a wide scale. We established the JFF scheme, now in its fifth year, and are pleased with progress. The scheme attracts quality hosts and Fellows. Those that have graduated so far have gone on into employment in social welfare law.

How does your work complement and not duplicate other services within your area?

There is no comparable scheme and without its investment in these posts at this point in the development of specialist social welfare lawyers, the capacity of the sector to offer these roles would be virtually nil. The scheme is part of a wider work at the Foundation to support infrastructure development in key social welfare legal agencies. We recognise these wider organisational development challenges facing the sector and support work to develop new models of attracting income and delivering services, including for example by harnessing technology. The scheme also complements work of other foundations committed to supporting the legal advice sector by ensuring supply of new specialists as well as boosting the capacity and energy in the sector. Organisations report frequently to us the boost that having a Fellow has given their organisation.

How will you ensure that your project will hear and represent the views and needs of disadvantaged people and/or diverse communities?

The Fellows will work day to day with some of the most vulnerable communities in London based in key London agencies whose role is to use the law as a tool for positive outcomes, to help people to secure their rights and to hold others to account whether that is a bullying landlord or a public body that may be acting unlawfully. We recruit in a way that reflects best practice in equal opportunity recruitment and a sizable proportion of Fellows themselves have lived experience of the issues faced by communities in London. The current Fellow at Hackney Law Centre (co-funded with CBT) was previously street homeless. Speaking at an event on paths to destitution, he noted that it was a social welfare lawyer that saved his life and that is what drove him to follow that career path himself.

How does your project engage and empower individuals and/or communities to come together on this issue? Will you be working with people who are particularly excluded?

There are two dimensions to this. The Fellows themselves are brought together as part of the wider training and development activities to foster a collective sense of being part of a movement of lawyers, using the law for positive outcomes. The second element is in the work Fellows do directly with communities. As above, day to day delivery of social welfare legal services is an important contributor. More widely the project element is a key opportunity. One example delivered by one of the current CBT-funded Fellows is the development of services for women experiencing domestic violence. This led to development of a network of women's organisations being empowered to use legal remedies to protect women from violence and to a wider successful campaign on access to law which secured £1.2m from the Tampon Tax Fund to take the London-based project to national scale. (Please see article attached under 'detailed proposal').

Is the focus of your project meeting an already identifiable need (acute or otherwise) or are there elements which are preventative and/or incorporate early action?

TLEF is part of the Early Action Funders Alliance. A large proportion of our wider grants centre on developing targeted 'just-in-time' legal education, giving people access to information and services that help identify and resolve problems early and prevent issues becoming more complex and costly to resolve in human and economic terms. Timely access to legal advice can be an absolutely crucial element of acting early to prevent more complex and costly problems, for example by helping someone to recognise that an eviction notice may be unlawful and therefore successfully challenging it and avoiding homelessness. Broader strategic use of law is also relevant. Fellows have been involved in taking cases to the Upper Tribunal, Appeal Court and even the Supreme Court, resulting in changes to public decision making, increasing access to public services and clarifications of the law all of which contribute to resolving problems before they escalate.

Who might you need to work closely with in delivering this project - whether before, during or afterwards?

If the application is successful, key partners will be London Legal Support Trust and CBT. They would help us to identify the six specialist social welfare agencies in London that will host Fellows. BPP Law School delivers the Professional Skills Course that Fellows are required to undertake and currently contribute this to the JFF scheme for free. Young Legal Aid Lawyers is a network that has provided invaluable help in supporting Fellows, and Fellows themselves are now deeply involved in YLAL as committee members and in delivering YLAL Initiatives such as an annual conference for young social justice lawyers.

Our aim as a funder is to help people move positively between any of the four stages of Surviving, Coping, Adapting and Thriving. For your project at which of these stages will most people begin their journey?

This is an interesting model. Provision of legal advice can work across these stages but the starting point is perhaps 'surviving'. There is strong evidence on the role of unresolved legal problems in causing or exacerbating paths to destitution. Having recourse to law helps people to secure rights relating to income, shelter and employment and to holding public bodies to account. Having these building blocks in place is key. However, the benefits of resolving legal problems can be wide. For example, there is a growing evidence base on the role of resolving legal problems on improving physical and mental health, demonstrating the essential role in law in helping people to move through the stages outlined to cope, adapt and thrive.

Will there be any elements of this project that will help you or your beneficiaries to reduce your environmental footprint?

This is not a focus of the programme. Information is not available at this point on whether organisations that go on to be selected to host Fellows have instigated work to measure and reduce their environmental footprint, but this could be incorporated into the assessment process if CBT was keen to do that.

Funding required for the project

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

Expenditure heading	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Grants to round one of three social welfare host organisations	120,000	120,000	0	0	0	0
Grants to round two of three social welfare host organisations	0	120,000	120,000	0	0	0
TOTAL:	120,000	240,000	120,000	0	0	0

What income has already been raised?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
The Legal Education Foundation	40,000	80,000	40,000	0	0	0
Other funders are contributing to Fellows in other parts of the country but this is not the focus of this bid to CBT so are not listed here	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:	40,000	80,000	40,000	0	0	0

What other funders are currently considering the proposal?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Other funders are contributing to Fellows in other parts of the country but this is not the focus of this bid to CBT so are not listed here	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:	0	0	0	0	0	0

How much is requested from the Trust?

Expenditure heading	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Grants to round one of three social welfare host organisations	80,000	80,000	0	0	0	0
Grants to round two of three social welfare host organisations	0	800,000	800,000	0	0	0
TOTAL:	80,000	160,000	80,000	0	0	0

Who will benefit?

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

1,200

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

London-wide

Does this project specifically target any groups or communities?

No - open to everyone

This project will specifically work with the following age groups:

This project will specifically work with the following gender groups:

This project will specifically work with the following ethnic groups:

If Other ethnic group, please give details:

This project will specifically work with Deaf and disabled people:

No

This project will specifically work with LGBTQI groups:

No

This project will specifically work with other groups or communities:

How will you target the groups/communities you have identified? What is your expertise in providing services for these groups?

Are there any groups or communities you think your organisation will find hard to include through this project?

No

If yes, please specify which groups or communities? Where possible using the categories listed above.

If yes, what steps will you take to make your services accessible to and meet the needs of the groups/communities you have identified?

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: **Matthew Smerdon**

Role within **Chief Executive**
Organisation: