



Committee: Funding Committee of the City Bridge Foundation Board	Date: 4 March 2024
Subject: CBF Chief Funding Director's Update Report	Public
Report of: Sacha Rose-Smith, CBF Chief Funding Director	For Information

Summary

To support the Funding Committee in the discharge of its duties, this regular report provides an update on key areas of activity to note and agree, where necessary. Specifically, the report provides details on the following: Funding Team Away Day, inflation, social investments, the LocalMotion, Anchor and Propel programmes, CBF's Funder Plus offer, the 2027 programme, Philanthropy, Impact & Learning, Co-opted Member recruitment, and a communications update on media coverage.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Funding Committee of the City Bridge Foundation Board, in discharge of functions for the City Corporation as Trustee of City Bridge Foundation and solely in the charity's best interests:

- i) Note the contents of the report.

Main Report

Funding Updates

1. Funding Team Away Day – The Funding Team Away Day was held on 24 January 2024 at the Royal Foundation of St Katharine in Limehouse, a registered charity and previous City Bridge Foundation (CBF) Stepping Stones grant holder. For the first time the Away Day included all members of the Funding Team, with Funding Managers, Funding Directors, Funding Executive Assistant and Impact and Learning (I&L) colleagues attending in the morning. Funding Officers and the Head of Managing Director's Office joined for lunch and the afternoon session.
2. Three Funding Managers led on planning for the day, taking a co-produced approach with the wider team and supported by Funding Directors. External facilitator Tatevik Sargsyan was commissioned to help support the design and delivery of the day. Through this process the aims for the day were agreed as:
 - a. To build cohesion and have space and time as a team;
 - b. Hear more about the Future Funding Direction; and
 - c. Have time to engage with the bigger picture and current challenges/opportunities for the sector.
3. The morning included a presentation from the Baobab Foundation (Baobab), who currently hold a strategic initiative award from CBF. Baobab is a member network and funder which seeks to radically transform the funding world and support racial justice by scaling resourcing to Black and Global Majority communities in the UK. Their presentation gave the team insight into Baobab's journey so far and the funding principles and processes which they have developed.



4. The afternoon session focused on the Future Funding Direction and was planned and delivered by the Chief Funding Director, Head of Impact and Learning (I&L) and the I&L Team. The Chief Funding Director presented to the team the Draft Future Funding Direction Policy timeline. This was followed by a series of interactive exercises delivered by the Head of I&L; the team was asked to creatively envision a better London by 2035 and the part CBF could play in this. There was then an opportunity to discuss and reflect on some of the learning from the evaluation of the *Bridging Divides* funding strategy and contribute to the consultation plans for the FFD. John Jackson, Communications Consultant for the Future Funding Direction consultation process, joined for the afternoon session to capture learning.
5. Inflation – The December 2023 Funding Committee agreed a second round of cost-of-living payments to help with ongoing cost pressures from high demand and persistently high inflation. These focused on awards that had been agreed before the inflation spike because Funding Managers have, since May 2022, worked closely with applicants to ensure appropriate year-on-year increases are built into new awards. 217 inflation payments were offered with a total value of £434,775. At date of writing this paper, 201 organisations have accepted their awards with a total value of £396,035.
6. This additional support has been welcomed, and Members would doubtless like to read some of the thanks received:

“This extra one-off payment will be so appreciated. It is true that the cost of everything has increased and we are noticing it more and more. We are also aware that those we support are really struggling to make ends meet” (Arts for All).

“You absolutely understand us and the challenges we face and respond to that in a simple, practical way.” (Hoxton Trust)

“Very few funders do this and it is valued by us and all the sector that you are so understanding of current pressures.” (Woman’s Trust)

“Thank you for going above and beyond as a funder, we really do appreciate it.” (Spinal Injuries Association)

Some organisations have yet to respond to the offer which Funding Officers and Funding Managers have been following up. The offer will be closed at the end of February 2024.

7. Social Investments – Candidates were interviewed for the Social Investment Analyst and Relationship Manager during the week commencing 5 February 2024. There was a strong field of candidates, and second interviews will be held on 20 February. Officers can provide an oral update on recruitment at the meeting.
8. Meanwhile, assessments continue with several investment opportunities as well as the development of public-facing social investment criteria which will also be used by this Committee in decision-making.



Bridging Divides Updates

9. LocalMotion – LocalMotion is a collaboration between CBF and five other funders, joining forces to tackle economic, environmental, and social inequality in six places. On 7 February the CBF Board agreed the Funding Committee’s recommendation to award £5m to the LocalMotion partnership and grant delegated authority regarding the potential hosting of LocalMotion. Work now continues with the partnership of Funders in developing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The Chief Funding Director will also be attending a governance away day on 26 February, working to co-create a governance structure between local places and funders.
10. Anchor Programme – The Anchor Programme aims to support equity-led infrastructure organisations by supporting them to deliver systemic change by awarding long-term core grants. Since Round One grants were awarded in 2023, work has begun with the Learning Partner, The Social Innovation Partnership (TSIP). The Learning Partner invited the first cohort of funded organisations to an in-person welcome session in January 2024. In addition to a press release and previous panel events last year, Anchor co-leads Clara Espinosa and Khadra Aden were recently invited to speak on a panel organised by the Association of Charitable Foundations (ACF), where they shared their experience of implementing participatory models in grant-making.
11. Unsuccessful Anchor applicants have been signposted to other relevant City Bridge Foundation programmes, such as the Infrastructure Strand. A dedicated webpage was also created listing the most common declination reasons and two webinars were delivered to organisations which require more support. Review of Round One of the Anchor Programme is underway in preparation for the launch of Round Two in Spring 2024.
12. Propel – Propel is a funder collaboration stewarded by London Funders, building on the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Propel extends collaboration beyond an emergency context to provide strategic and long-term funding at scale for systems change work (fundamental change that affects how the whole system functions). £3.5m was due to be spent on the ‘Expand’ programme (extending the original ‘Explore’ grants which were for only one year) in this financial year. Having engaged in six-month learning visits with the majority of Explore grantees, it is now expected that most of this £3.5m will take place in the following financial year.
13. The reasons for the shifted timescale are multi-fold. Several partners have reported staffing and capacity issues that have affected their exploration. All Explore grants were awarded to user-led organisations and alongside benefiting from the expertise and experience of those with lived experience skills and knowledge, those individuals are also directly impacted by the issues that they are trying to address which can result in higher absence and staff turnover. In the longer term, this is not expected to affect the overall outcomes of the funded work for those reporting such challenges, but in some cases has required flexibility with grant terms (e.g. delaying grant start and end dates) and budget. In some cases,



organisations may require a small gap in funding while they plan for their expansion.

14. Equally, while the relational approach has not required a significant increase in intensity of staff time to develop the applications, as the conversations with organisations are starting earlier in the development of the workplan and budgets, funded organisations sometimes require more time to gather and share information relevant to their proposals.
15. Nonetheless, verbal feedback from grantees about the approach to continuation of their funding, putting greater onus on the funder to share the responsibility for reporting and developing a new application, and working conversationally to explore learning and what direction makes sense next, has been overwhelmingly positive.
16. Bridge Programme (Funder Plus) – In addition to providing funding to organisations across London, CBF offers a range of non-financial support, known as 'Funder Plus'. Through the funder plus offer, CBF supports organisations with their development, provides access to learning and training opportunities, provides Access and Eco audits and utilises the charity's convening power and networks. In September and November 2018, the former City Bridge Trust Committee approved the pilot of a new Funder Plus offer, now referred to as the Bridge Programme.
17. The approved model involved a £60,000 contract to Rocket Science, appointed through the City Corporation's procurement process, as Learning Partner and Manager of the programme. Grants of £150,000 each were awarded to Locality and the Cranfield Trust to provide a diagnostics service and then connect CBT grantees to appropriate providers of support services or to facilitate peer support/networking opportunities amongst grantees. Total initial costs were £360,000, with Locality and the Cranfield Trust each receiving a further £225,000 in 2021 as top-up funding to sustain diagnostic services and for payments to service providers.
18. Having received excellent guidance and support from Rocket Science, the management of the Bridge Programme was taken in-house in March 2023 in order to integrate and embed this work as part of our core offer for our funded partners. The Bridge Programme is managed by James Lee, Head of Bridge Programme and Total Assets and continues to be a valued source of support, receiving positive feedback from our funded partners. In total, the Bridge Programme has worked with 149 organisations on a one-to-one basis and has delivered 28 one-to-many learning opportunities, attracting 297 attendees.
19. A review of the Bridge Programme led by partners Cranfield Trust and Locality is currently underway. Expected to conclude in spring 2024, this review will culminate in a full report presented to the June 2024 meeting. The paper will summarise the findings of the review and propose a path for iteration of the Bridge Programme to ensure it remains a relevant, efficient and reliable source of support for our funded partners. Furthermore, officers are working closely with the End-to-End User Review to ensure that approaches are complementary and aligned with the



recommendations emerging from this work. This should foster a cohesive and coordinated effort in refining CBF's funding practices and future funding direction.

20. Shared Financial Due Diligence – Funding Team and CBF & Charities Finance Team colleagues have been working with London Funders (the convening body) and other London grant-makers to develop a series of pilots to test new ways of sharing financial due diligence processes between funders. The aims of the pilot are to reduce the time and resource required for applicants during the assessment process, and to collaborate more effectively in our grant assessment processes across the Capital. If successful, it is hoped that the pilot could be extended to other areas of due diligence beyond financial due diligence.
21. 2027 Programme – 2027 is a programme offering people from a working-class background paid training to gain experience in the grant-giving sector. Their aim is that by 2027, talented members of working-class communities hold 40% of grant-giving roles. CBF has been involved for the last three years, with all of our past associates going on to work within the sector. Since November 2023, Chloe Lloyd and Mitva Shah have joined as Associate Funding Managers for 12 months. Both have already taken on some CGU assessments, attended learning visits and sector-wide meetings, and are fitting in with the wider team well, bringing new and interesting insights. A link to the programme is found here: [2027 – Talent Programme](#).

Philanthropy Updates

22. Work is ongoing to secure agreement from the City Corporation to conclude the joint approach to philanthropy on the termination of the current Joint Philanthropy Strategy in March 2024. It is thought that this is likely to be forthcoming, recognising the conflict of interests risks of a continued joint approach. Officers are currently exploring member appetite to support the generation of a new stand-alone Philanthropy Strategy for the City Corporation. For this reason, the planned paper for the February Policy & Resources Committee has been postponed until the March Committee.

Impact and Learning (I&L)

23. Future Funding Direction – Consultation to inform the direction of CBF's future funding direction started, with a roundtable event attended by 18 London based / remit funders on 19 February 2024 at Guildhall. The roundtable was facilitated by the Chief Funding Director and the I&L team and supported by James Banks from *London Funders*. The purpose of the roundtable was to help understand where CBF and other funders sit in the funding ecosystem, mapped to the challenges and need that exists across London. We wanted to start to identify where CBF is uniquely placed to make the most difference and identify where are there significant areas for collaboration. There is a standalone paper on the Future Funding Direction.
24. The I&L team is delivering an evaluation of the current Bridging Divides Strategy, incorporating learning from funded organisations, colleagues and other funders since 2019 as well as current insights from colleagues. Emma Horrigan, CBF's Data Analyst has produced an engaging and informative analysis of the most



pressing issues facing Londoners. This data, along with evidence from the roundtable is informing the content of a large-scale, face to face consultation event on 5 March to be held at the Barbican. Members of the CBF Funding Committee have been invited and are encouraged to join the event. Please contact Emma Whitton at events@cityoflondon.gov.uk for more information about the event.

25. Learning Visits – There have been 22 learning visits completed since April 2023, six since the last report. Each Member of the Funding Committee is welcome, and encouraged, to attend at least one learning visit per year, to meet staff at funded organisations, hear about their successes and challenges and share thoughts on issues in London. Other Members of the Board are also welcome to do so. Members are matched with visits according to their interests and areas of expertise. Please get in touch with Ruth Feder, Head of Impact & Learning (ruth.feder@cityoflondon.gov.uk) for more information.

Governance Updates

26. Co-opted Member Recruitment – The Funding Committee currently has vacant positions for up to two co-opted members. Following discussion with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Funding Committee, officers are engaging a recruitment agency to support with the search of two new co-opted members, with skills and experience in funding and social investments. At this stage, it is hoped that recommendations for new appointees will be presented to the May CBF Board meeting to enable new candidates to participate in the first Funding Committee meeting of the new civic year, in June 2024. The Funding Committee will be engaged throughout the recruitment process.

Communications Updates

27. Media Coverage – In December 2023 and January 2024 there were 49 items of City Bridge Foundation media coverage, of which 20 were on the topic of funding, 20 on bridges and the remainder related to CBF generally. Coverage included an interview on [GB News](#) with Funding Committee Chair Paul Martinelli about the Foundation's support for Queen's Crescent Community Association ahead of its Christmas meals for older people.
28. Elsewhere, [BBC London](#) and [BBC Radio London](#) reported on a £221,000 grant to East End homeless charity Providence Row, while there was coverage on [London Live](#) about a £25,000 grant to Heathrow Special Needs Centre and in [Islington Tribune](#) on funding for the Culpepper Singalong Choir.

Conclusion

29. This report provides a high-level summary of CBF activities since the Funding Committee last met in December 2023. The Funding Committee is asked to note the content of the report. Further information on any of the updates given in this report can be provided to the Funding Committee orally in the meeting or in written format in advance of or as a follow-up to the meeting.

Sacha Rose-Smith

Chief Funding Director

[E:Sacha.Rose-Smith@citybridgefoundation.org.uk](mailto:Sacha.Rose-Smith@citybridgefoundation.org.uk)