

Committee:	Date:
City Bridge Trust Committee (for decision)	13 th March 2014
Subject:	Public
Strategic Initiatives: The Media Trust	
Report of:	For Decision
Chief Grants Officer	
Summary	
<p>This paper proposes that you build on the success of the Media Trust's London360 initiative, providing training and mentoring for young Londoners in community journalism with funding over three years.</p>	
Recommendation	
<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the sum of £240,000 over three years (3 x £80,000) to enable the Media Trust to further develop its London360 initiative to be costed against your budget for Strategic Initiatives 2013/14. 	

Main Report

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Media Trust is the UK's leading communications charity which trains and works with other charities to enhance their communications, enabling communities to find their voice and make themselves heard.
- 1.2 It also provides multi-media channels, including the Community Channel, which enable community groups large and small to get their message across.
- 1.3 The Trust has worked in partnership with the Media Trust on several occasions. For example, it provided bespoke communications training to a sample of organisations funded on your first Small Grants Programme. The organisations selected were charities that would not usually have access to such quality training. This included learning how to write press releases, undertake local radio interviews, design posters and produce quality promotional videos. This was a two-year programme which culminated in a half-day learning event and awards ceremony showcasing the five organisations that had most improved their communications as a result of the training.
- 1.4 More recently, you have asked the Media Trust to work with cohorts of your Working with Londoners grantees to produce videos about themselves in an initiative called "Telling Your Stories". The most recent cohort of films were made with some of your 'Growing Localities' grantees and as well as videos for each of the participating organisations, the Media Trust produced a full-

length film featuring your Growing Localities grantees which was broadcast on the Community Channel on 26th and 28th May 2013. Blue Peter presenter, Chris Collins, appeared in and narrated the film.

2.0 About London360

- 2.1 London360 provides young Londoners with training and mentoring in community journalism. It gives them a voice and enables them to tell and disseminate the stories of London's communities via flagship media partnerships.
- 2.2 You helped kick-start this initiative with two one-year grants (2 x £142,000) for work taking place during 2011/12 and 2012/13.
- 2.3 To date, over 400 young people have been trained, and over 2,000 stories produced and distributed. A new broadcast platform on London Live, promoted by the Evening Standard, has been secured for year 4 of its inception. A Strategic Initiative grant from the Trust would provide the match-funding needed to draw down £100,000 secured from London Live, the Golden Bottle Trust and Tennyson Insurance.
- 2.4 The Media Trust aims to encourage young people from all backgrounds to participate in the project, enabling them to share community and cultural experiences. It also recruits young people through partner agencies such as Fitzrovia Youth in Action, Who Cares Trust (both of which you currently fund) and Black Youth Achievements. Of the young people worked in the last year, 41% described themselves as NEET (not in education, employment or training) and 91% were from BME communities.

3.0 Impact to date

- 3.1 The 400 young participants have developed the confidence, life skills, media skills and employability whilst telling community stories that have reached audiences of millions in London (BBC Radio London, Evening Standard, The Voice, LBC, Time Out and others) and across the UK via the Community Channel.
- 3.2 It is a credit to the success of this initiative that London Live and the Evening Standard want to provide a broadcast platform and work in partnership with the Media Trust.
- 3.3 Many of London360's reporters are now working across London's media including with ITV news, London Live, BBC Sport, BBC Radio1, MTV, ITV, Eastenders Press Office, Shine Media, Jewish Chronicle, Gospel Radio, Chinese Media, Mobo Awards and Sunrise Radio whilst others have set up their own freelance media production businesses. Training from the Media Trust gives the young reporters a unique perspective on the issues that affect London's more disadvantaged and isolated communities.

4.0 Plans for the next phase from April 2014

- 4.1 From April 2014, London360 will have a weekly broadcast magazine slot on London Live, the new London-wide channel launching on Freeview 8, as well as on the Community Channel's UK-wide television platform. This will reach audiences of over 5.5 million through broadcasts of 24 hours on Sky and

Virgin, 6 hours on Freeview, alongside a unique 24 hour window on BBC iPlayer. The Evening Standard will promote the London360 programmes, the most powerful of which will continue to be distributed through a range of wider media, including the Media Trust's exclusive partnerships with BBC Radio London, The Voice, MTV, Westside Radio and others. All content is branded London360, a brand developed by the young reporters themselves.

- 4.2 From June 2014, the Media Trust proposes to engage a further 110 disadvantaged Londoners across the year as reporters and community journalists, training them to report for broadcast TV (London Live and the Community Channel), print, radio and online media; and to develop their own progression opportunities, including for some, into paid work in London's media.
- 4.3 Of these 110, ten will be full-time community reporters, working on five-month placements at the Media Trust's offices reporting on a range of community-based issues and stories from across the Capital. Of the remaining 100, all will receive training, e-training and other resources to enable them to become 'community journalists', acting as the eyes and ears of their neighbourhoods. However, 50 of them will also receive a higher level of training from media professionals.
- 4.4 This approach would be repeated in years 2 and 3 when 2 further cohorts of 100 young people would be recruited each year.
- 4.4 During the second year of your previous funding, the Media Trust began to work more closely with the Trust, with the young people partnering some of your grant recipients to tell their stories. For example, London360 featured one of your grantees, Contact the Elderly, which works to tackle social isolation amongst older people. This was a very positive experience for all concerned and afterwards Contact the Elderly said *"We thoroughly enjoyed working with the Media Trust to produce a feature on loneliness among older people in London and appreciated the opportunity to highlight this growing issue, as well as being able to get Contact the Elderly's message out further afield"*.
- 4.5 If you approve funding today, it is proposed to build on this and provide the Media Trust with regular updates on recent grants to enable more media coverage for your grantees and recognition of your support for London's communities.
- 4.6 Whilst the Media Trust cannot guarantee that its training will lead to employment in the industry in today's difficult economic climate

5.0 Budget

5.1 The annual budget for this project is set out in the table below:

Income	£
Golden Bottle Trust	15,000
Tennyson Insurance	45,000
London Live	40,000
Total	100,000
Expenditure	
Executive Producer	44,000
Project Officer/Youth Outreach	23,000
Editor (p/t)	17,000
Online/social media producer (p/t)	13,000
Volunteer expenses	18,000
Project running costs, overheads & management	58,750
Graphics TV/online	6,000
Total	180,000
Shortfall requested from City Bridge Trust	80,000

6.0 Financial Observations

- 6.1 Audited accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013 show a deficit of £366,800 (11% of turnover), comprising £305,360 on unrestricted funds and £61,440 on restricted funds. The deficit on restricted funds arose, due to expenditure incurred in the year relating to income which was received in the previous financial year. The charity advises that the deficit on unrestricted funds was due to the trustees' decision to use up to £350,000 of its unrestricted reserves to invest in its fundraising and marketing infrastructure in order to help boost its fundraising capacity in the current tough funding climate. In the event, only £300,000 was used for this purpose.
- 6.2 The current year forecast to 31 March 2014 shows a deficit of £247,000 (7.3% of turnover), comprising deficits of £223,000 on restricted funds and £24,000 on unrestricted funds. Total projected income is £3,406,000, all of which has been confirmed.
- 6.3 The draft budget for 2014/15 projects an overall surplus of £34,000 (0.9% of turnover), comprising a surplus of £31,000 on restricted funds and a surplus of £3,000 on unrestricted funds. Total projected income amounts to £3,955,000, of which £1,776,000 (45%) had been confirmed as at 25 February 2014. Grant applications pending amount to £687,000 (17%) and

income of £1,492,000 (38%) is estimated from corporate membership, fundraising events and trading income.

- 6.4 The reserves policy states that after assessing the potential material financial risks that the charity may face that cannot be managed in other ways, Media Trust needs to build up unrestricted reserves to £500,000 (equivalent to 1.5 months' worth of 2014/15 budgeted expenditure) by March 2016, in order to mitigate against those risks. As at 31st March 2013, free unrestricted reserves stood at £406,551, which is equivalent to 1.2 months' worth of 2014/15 budgeted expenditure.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The Media Trust is highly respected for the quality of its work and as well as providing services for the voluntary sector, it also undertakes commissioned external communications work for Government (eg health campaigns) and for the private sector (eg on corporate responsibility). It is backed by and receives considerable in-kind support from many of the main TV, digital, film and print media organisations.
- 7.2 The opportunities it is able to provide the London360 reporters are without parallel. For example, one young man that came through London360 was working in low-paid part-time employment working as a security guard. He spent a total of 5 months with London360 producing, editing, presenting, and writing about a wide range of community news stories. During this time he gained the range of skills and the self-confidence to secure full-time paid employment with MTV. As he himself put it *"I'm now working with MTV and that only came about through London360. My CV is ¾ of the work I did during my time. They had a look at the footage I had been part of and called me in for an interview."*
- 7.3 The proposed work with City Bridge Trust grantees is an opportunity to add value to your grant-making by enabling their work and key messages to reach new audiences. It is also an opportunity to promote the work of the Trust more widely.
- 7.4 Support for London360 for the next three years will enable the Media Trust to build on its success to date with the London Live broadcast providing an additional and wide-reaching platform through which to tell London's stories.

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