

MEETING 10/04/2014

Ref: 12138

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Strengthening London's Voluntary Sector

Community Action Southwark

Adv: Tim Wilson

Base: Southwark

Amount requested: £146,884

Benefit: Southwark

Amount recommended: £146,900

Purpose of grant request: To support voluntary and community organisations to demonstrate the impact of their services more effectively.

Background

Community Action Southwark (CAS) is the borough's council for voluntary services. CAS provides a range of support activities for charitable organisations including training, consultancy, representation, and networking activities. CAS has built good relations with the local authority, managing two grant programmes on its behalf and participating in a number of local fora.

There are over 1,200 registered charities in Southwark, and whilst the borough is home to headquarters of several large national bodies the majority of organisations are relatively small with an average turnover of £100,000 and one paid staff member. CAS' Development Team is responsible for providing direct support services and, reflecting the borough's reliance on volunteer input has, in recent years, focused primarily on governance and volunteer management.

Funding History

You awarded CAS £25,000 in 2001 for an evaluation of its fundraising advice work, and £122,000 in 2006 for a capacity building programme for health and social care organisations. Reports on both awards, made under your old Main Grants programmes, were rated 'good' by your officers and the files were archived some time ago.

Current Application

In 2013 CAS prepared a 'mini almanac' of the borough's voluntary sector in order to demonstrate the range of services provided by local charities and to provide evidence of the sector's value. From this research, as well as learning from the work of CAS' Development Team, it became clear that a lot of Southwark charities struggled to articulate their outcomes, and that this was harming their ability to secure funding.

CAS proposes to deliver a three year monitoring and evaluation support programme for over 140 local organisations. The work will engage trustees, volunteers and staff and be delivered primarily at each organisation's own office. Charities will receive support to develop a monitoring framework and to implement improved monitoring practices. CAS will raise awareness of the programme through a series of workshops, and will write up case studies to share learning from the programme participants.

Beneficiaries will receive an average of five days' support time and the work will be delivered by a new staff member who is yet to be recruited.

As a result of its Development Team's work, CAS already has a good awareness of which organisations would gain most benefit from the work. However, the charity will also seek to engage organisations it has not previously supported through its network of partners across the borough.

Financial Observations

Audited accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013 show a surplus of £104,106 (18% of turnover), comprising £99,745 on unrestricted funds and £4,361 on restricted funds. The charity advises that the surplus was due to increased income to deliver one-off and discrete pieces of work coupled with tight controls on spending which reduced charitable expenditure on items such as consultancy and professional fees.

The reserves policy states that the organisation aims to hold between three and six months' worth of running costs in free unrestricted reserves, which equates to a target holding of between £147,837 and £295,675, based on budgeted expenditure for 2014-15. At 31st March 2013, the organisation held free unrestricted reserves of £229,839 which equates to 4.6 months' worth of running costs.

The latest forecast for the year ended 31st March 2014 shows total income of £749,186 all of which is confirmed, and a surplus of £53,137 (7% of turnover), comprising £6,215 on unrestricted funds and £46,922 on restricted funds.

The budget for 2014-15 shows a deficit of £2,334 (0.3% of turnover), entirely on unrestricted funds. Total income is expected to be £670,365, of which £584,865 (87.2%) has been confirmed as at 20th March 2014.

Officer's Appraisal

CAS is a well-regarded infrastructure organisation and has led several innovative support programmes in recent years. The capacity building service which is the focus of this application has been designed to ensure that learning is embedded in the beneficiary organisations and not simply delivered through classroom teaching for a single staff member or volunteer. By engaging the whole board and staff team from the start, CAS will be able not only to look at skills and knowledge, but also the organisational dynamics that might be impediments to change. The time per organisation appears sufficient to help the worker support each organisation and the project is likely to generate useful learning for other capacity building programmes in other boroughs.

Recommendation

£146,900 over three years (£47,800; £49,100; £50,000) towards a full-time (35 hours per week) Outcomes Framework Development Officer and running costs for Community Action Soutwark's monitoring and evaluation support programme.

The City Bridge Trust

Investing In Londoners: Application for a grant



About your organisation

Name of your organisation: Community Action Southwark	
If your organisation is part of a larger organisation, what is its name?	
In which London Borough is your organisation based? Southwark	
Contact person: Mr Graham Collins	Position: Head of Sustainability & Development
Website: http://www.casouthwark.org.uk	
Legal status of organisation: Registered Charity	Charity, Charitable Incorporated Company or company number: 1105835
When was your organisation established? 01/04/2008	
<p>Aims of your organisation:</p> <p>Our vision is of stronger Southwark communities that fulfil their potential. We work to create and support the conditions for a strong and thriving voluntary and community sector in Southwark. We have three strategic priorities (and one enabling priority): to increase the resilience of voluntary and community sector organisations; to create and maintain an equitable and influential relationship between the public and voluntary and community sectors and to increase collaboration; developing, sharing and co-ordination of resources, skills and knowledge within the voluntary and community sector.</p>	
<p>Main activities of your organisation:</p> <p>Community Action Southwark (CAS) is the recognised umbrella organisation (or Council for Voluntary Service) for the voluntary and community sector in Southwark. CAS fulfils three key strategic functions for the voluntary and community sector in Southwark: support, influence and providing connections.</p> <p>We equip voluntary organisations and community groups in Southwark with the tools and information they need to help them make a difference in the communities they work in. We provide training and support on a wide range of topics to empower the voluntary and community sector to become more resilient. CAS also represents the voluntary and community sector to local government and other public sector agencies.</p>	

Number of staff

Full-time:	Part-time:	Management committee members:	Active volunteers:
13	3	11	9

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?
Rented	Rolling monthly contract

Grant Request

Details of grant request

Under which of City Bridge Trust's programmes are you applying? Strengthening London's Voluntary Sector
Which of the programme outcome(s) does your application aim to achieve? More organisations with improved capabilities in monitoring, evaluation and impact reporting More organisations with improved capabilities in monitoring, evaluation and impact reporting
Please describe the purpose of your funding request in one sentence. To create a step change in the cultures and practices of voluntary and community organisations enabling them to effectively demonstrate the impact of their services.
When will the funding be required? 01/07/2014
How much funding are you requesting? Year 1: £47,796 Year 2: £49,113 Year 3: £49,975 Total: £146,884
Do you plan to continue the activity beyond the period for which you are requesting funding? If so, how do you intend to fund it? During the current financial year we have piloted a paid for consultancy service to voluntary and community organisations offering bespoke training and advice. It is still early days, but the offer has been well received and we intend to broaden our offer out over the coming two years to generate income to support an Officer.
If you need any planning or other statutory consents for the project to proceed, what stage have the applications reached? N/A

Summary of grant request

Over the last 18 months CAS has been tracking the prevalence of the number of voluntary and community organisations that struggle to collate and articulate the impact that their services have on their beneficiaries. 78% of organisations that CAS has worked with in the last 18 months have inadequate methodical systems in place to collect, analyse and report on their outcomes.

In June 2013, our research found 85% of respondents needed additional help to understand impact measurement, noting capacity and resource restriction as a significant obstacle. 80% of registered charities in Southwark have an annual income of less than £500,000 and lack the expertise and tools to collate, assess and articulate their impact and resources to pay for external consultants.

There will be three strands to the project, building on CAS's expertise in providing both practical training and information and 1:1 intensive support to both staff and trustees:

1. Training and awareness sessions, including both practical workshops focusing on defining outcome frameworks for organisations with little knowledge, to more advanced seminars for organisations wishing to develop a 'theory of change' model
2. A selected cohort of 30 Southwark VCOs in each of the three years, of different sizes and subsectors, to receive direct 1:1 support in using a range of impact measurement tools to develop excellent practice
3. Aggregation of learning outlining the challenges faced in measuring impact and ways to overcome these; some of the cohort organisations acting as case studies to share their expertise with others

This Southwark-wide project will:

- a). increase awareness amongst voluntary and community organisations of the urgency, possibility and benefits of 'upping their game' on outcomes and impact;
- b). develop organisational skills in strategically planning for, monitoring, communicating, comparing, assessing and improving their impact;
- c). generate new knowledge about best practice and evidence of 'what works'; and
- d). enable organisations to provide, themselves, beneficiaries, funders and commissioners with more robust information about the outcomes and value of their services.

For over 10 years CAS has been providing a range of resources to build skills, the quality and resilience within the sector - a role that 8 out of 10 stakeholders feel could not be performed by another organisation in Southwark. CAS fully understands the local voluntary and community sector and is trusted by it to provide objective, informative and enabling advice and practical support.

In November 2013 we published comprehensive research outlining the size and scope of the sector in Southwark. This has provided CAS with primary data and detailed analysis of the make-up of the sector, its needs and its structure -- enabling us to tailor our services in a thematic and targeted manner.

This project will meet the Trust's aim of more organisations with improved capabilities in monitoring, evaluation and impact reporting.

Many of the organisations who will benefit from this project have limited capacity to develop or implement new ways of working. They will often use volunteers and staff who may have multiple responsibilities. CAS will adopt a non-prescriptive approach. By listening to the organisation or individual, and assessing their needs, we will encourage them to devise their own solutions and offer tangible support to achieve them.

CAS has developed an effective outcomes approach to planning, monitoring and evaluating our work. We have developed a monitoring framework that has proved to be effective in capturing detailed on-going data and feedback on our work extending through our events programme, 1:1 work; website, tools and resources. The data and feedback enables us to report in detail as well as informing us on the improvement of existing projects and the development of new work.

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.

Provide practical training to 144 voluntary and community organisations to develop their skills, knowledge, and confidence in the importance of an outcomes approach and provide guidelines on how to effectively implement a coherent and methodical assessment framework

Work intensively on a 1:1 basis with 90 voluntary and community organisations supporting the staff, trustees and users to develop an 'outcomes map' outlining potential outcomes and corresponding outputs that are aligned to their strategic aims and objectives

Intensively support 90 voluntary and community organisations to develop appropriate and practical tools and methodologies to collate, assess and report on outcomes. Provide support to develop an organisational outcomes assessment framework enabling them to practically implement and embed it throughout the organisation - at both the strategic and operational levels

Aggregate learning from the project and use it to outline the generic challenges facing organisations in developing and implementing an outcomes approach and how they overcome them. Support 30 organisations to write case studies to inform and inspire other organisations on the importance and benefits of using an outcomes approach

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.

By July 2017, 144 voluntary and community organisations will have increased their awareness, knowledge and confidence about defining and assessing the impact of their products and services and understand the value of developing and implementing an organisational outcomes approach.

By July 2017, 90 voluntary and community organisations will have a comprehensive 'outcomes map' detailing outputs, outcomes, and measurement methods enabling them to outline the desired and potential impact of their products and services in a logical and robust manner.

By July 2017, 90 voluntary and community organisations will have the skills, tools and methodologies to collate, assess and report on outcomes, enabling them to provide evidence based outcomes data to their trustees and beneficiaries, funders and commissioners, and logically inform their future organisational strategy and work-plans.

The shared learning about 'what works' (and what doesn't) in developing and implementing an outcomes framework will enable organisations to identify the most appropriate approach for them. The detailed case studies will inform staff and trustees on the benefits of adopting an outcomes approach and inspire them to take action.

Who will benefit?

About your beneficiaries

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

1,080

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

Southwark (100%)

What age group(s) will benefit?

All ages

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?

21-30%

Funding required for the project

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

Expenditure heading	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Staff costs	34,327	36,050	37,107	107,484
Management costs	10,269	10,577	10,895	31,741
Indirect costs	5,972	5,928	5,486	17,386
Direct costs	3,200	2,486	1,973	7,659
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0

TOTAL:	53,769	55,042	55,461	164,272
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What income has already been raised?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Indirect costs - to be paid by CAS unrestricted income	5,972	5,928	5,486	17,387
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0

TOTAL:	0	0	0	0
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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
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How much is requested from the Trust?

Expenditure heading	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Staff costs	34,327	36,050	37,107	107,484
Management costs	10,269	10,577	10,894	31,741
Direct costs	3,200	2,486	1,973	7,659
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0

TOTAL:	47,796	49,113	49,975	146,884
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Finance details

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

Financial year ended:	Month: March	Year: 2013
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Income received from:	£
Voluntary income	0
Activities for generating funds	23,298
Investment income	515
Income from charitable activities	536,148
Other sources	12,451
Total Income:	572,412

Expenditure:	£
Charitable activities	464,301
Governance costs	4,005
Cost of generating funds	0
Other	0
Total Expenditure:	468,306
Net (deficit)/surplus:	104,106
Other Recognised Gains/(Losses):	0
Net Movement in Funds:	104,106

Asset position at year end	£
Fixed assets	245
Investments	0
Net current assets	268,151
Long-term liabilities	
*Total Assets (A):	268,396

Reserves at year end	£
Endowment funds	0
Restricted funds	38,312
Unrestricted funds	230,084
*Total Reserves (B):	268,396

* 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?

71 – 80%

Organisational changes

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

Previous funding received

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

	2010 £	2011 £	2012 £
City of London (except City Bridge Trust)	0	0	0
London Local Authorities	479,049	610,495	376,768
London Councils	0	0	0
Health Authorities	0	0	0
Central Government departments	169,049	180,967	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	2010 £	2011 £	2012 £
Big Lottery Fund	78,344	57,064	78,344
Capital Community Foundation	0	3,078	0
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
	0	0	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: **Graham Keith Collins**

Role within **Head of Sustainability & Development**
Organisation: