

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London Safer**

**AVA (Against Violence and Abuse)**

**Adv: Jemma Grieve Combes**

**Base: Hackney**

**Benefit: London-wide**

**Amount requested: £135,900**

**{Revised request: £127,486}**

**Amount recommended: £127,500**

**Purpose of grant request: Core funding.**

**Background**

AVA is a 'second tier' or 'support' organisation working in the field of domestic and sexual violence. The organisation originally operated as the Greater London Domestic Violence Forum (as part of the London Action Trust) and became an independent charity in 2010. AVA provides support services to organisations and agencies so that they in turn can deliver safe and effective services to meet the needs of victims/survivors and their children, and actively hold abusers accountable for their behaviour. Each year it trains 2,500 people through a mix of open and in-house training, some of which is Open College Network accredited. Training focuses on specialist issues with topics including: the new child maintenance system and what it means for domestic violence survivors; recovery for babies and toddlers exposed to domestic violence; and how technology is used to abuse and protect young people experiencing violence against women and girls. The organisation is also part of the support services strand of ASCENT, the London violence against women and girls consortium funded by London Councils.

The organisation's work includes some specific projects including the links between domestic and sexual violence; substance use and mental health; children and young people (previously funded by the City Bridge Trust); health; and survivor involvement.

**Funding History**

You awarded AVA £144,900 in 2006 over three years plus a further £107,000 in 2010 over two years for the salary and on-costs of developing and co-ordinating better services for children and young people affected by domestic violence in London. Both grants were well reported on. A request was declined in 2005 as the organisation did not have a track record in the proposed area of work.

**Current Application**

AVA is requesting a contribution towards its core costs including part funding of the Director, the Deputy Director, and the Finance/Admin posts. Whilst the organisation aims to fundraise on a 'full cost recovery' basis, this is not always possible, (particularly when bidding for contracts) and the organisation finds it harder to raise funds for more strategic activities. A contribution towards core costs would allow the organisation to support the core costs of its individual projects; enable the Director to engage in strategic policy and meetings to secure long term change; enable the development of income generating activities to increase future sustainability; run networking and learning events; and produce resources and information. Although

AVA has a national remit it is very clear that any City Bridge Trust funding would be used solely towards London-focused work. Robust monitoring systems are in place which would allow the organisation to track and report on this.

### **Financial Observations**

Audited accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013 show a surplus of £14,341 (2.4% of turnover of £595,593), comprising a surplus of £30,937 on unrestricted funds and deficit of £16,596 on restricted funds.

The reserves policy states that the organisation aims to hold free unrestricted reserves equivalent to 3 to 6 months' worth of unrestricted expenditure which in 2012/13 equated to between £62,075 and £124,149. At 31st March 2013 free unrestricted reserves were in-line with this target at £121,773.

The draft outturn for the year ended 31st March 2014 shows income of £512,887 and expenditure of £607,777 leading to a deficit of £94,890 (18.5% of turnover), comprising a deficit of £96,933 on restricted funds and a surplus of £2,043 on unrestricted funds.

For the current year to 31st March 2015 income is projected to be £454,424 and expenditure £545,000 leading to a deficit of £90,576 (19.9% of turnover), comprising £81,544 on restricted funds and £9,032 on unrestricted funds. Total income of £454,424 is predicted, £314,796 (69.3%) has been secured whilst the remaining £139,628 (30.7%) is expected to be raised from training £40,650, fundraising £60k, consultancy £35,640 and events £3,338k.

At 31st March 2015 free unrestricted funds are expected to be £104,178 which is equivalent to 6.6 months' worth of 2014/15 unrestricted expenditure. Going forward, the organisation has advised that it is looking for ways to reduce expenditure and generate new income to balance its budget in future years.

### **Officer's Appraisal**

This is an important strategic organisation for improving the quality of services and identifying gaps in tackling domestic and sexual violence in London. As the whole of AVA's activities contribute towards your Safer London programme priorities, your policy enables you to consider a grant towards core costs. Since AVA submitted the application it has been successful in securing income specifically towards the Director's salary and, therefore, adjusted the original request to the Trust, affecting the overall request and proportion allocated to each year. Revised costings are attached in Appendix A for your information.

### **Recommendation**

**£127,500 over three years (£41,500; £39,400; £46,600) towards core costs, including the salaries of the Director (7.2hrs rising to 12hrs in year 3); Deputy Director(s) (12 hours reducing to 5.4 hours in years 2 and 3); and two administration posts (13.5 hrs), for AVA to support organisations and agencies in the field of domestic and sexual violence in London. The grant in year 3 is conditional upon sufficient funds being raised to make the work.**