

MEETING: 25/09/2014

Ref: 12300

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London More Inclusive

Back-Up Trust

Adv: Tania Bronstein

Amount requested: £198,623

Base: Wandsworth

Benefit: London-wide

Amount recommended: £165,600

The Charity

Back-Up Trust (BUT) provides peer-led rehabilitation services, mentoring and support to enable children and adults with a spinal cord injury (SCI) to lead independent lives and realise their full potential. It is the only charity dealing with the psychological impacts of SCI and reaches 60% of newly injured people in the UK.

The Application

Three years' funding is sought to provide: (a) wheelchair skills training to Londoners admitted to the London Spinal Injuries Centre in Stanmore and the National Centre in Stoke Mandeville; (b) mentoring to support their transition and adjustment from hospital to home; and (c) "Back up to Work" courses to help spinal cord injured people in developing skills and confidence to search for, and access employment.

The Recommendation

This is a highly professional and progressive charity whose services are led, staffed and delivered by people with lived experiences of SCI; and which consistently receives positive feedback from service users. The breakdown of costs as outlined in Appendix A to the application form show comparatively modest project costs (because of heavy volunteer involvement in delivering the work) but high support costs. Your officer has liaised with the organisation on these costings and agreed a more suitable sum, more realistically apportioned between direct and support costs, hence the recommendation:

£165,600 over 3 years (£54,100; £55,200; £56,300) towards salaries, project costs and overheads to support Londoners with a spinal cord injury.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
16/05/2002	£18,000 over three years (£8,500; £6,000; £3,500) towards volunteer expenses and the additional rental costs of office accommodation providing volunteering opportunities for people with spinal injuries.
10/06/1999	£250,000 towards the costs of purchasing a clipper hull and providing adaptations for disabled Londoners participating in a round-the-world clipper race, subject to the balance being raised elsewhere.

Background and detail of proposal

Every year, around 1,000 people in the UK sustain an SCI (either through accident or illness) resulting in life-long paralysis, and/or damaged bladder, bowel, or sexual function. The impact on the person and their loved ones is often devastating, and exacerbated by inaccessible environments and negative perceptions of disability.

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BUT was set up in 1986 by a former James Bond stunt double after suffering an accident, and has since expanded to offer a host of services to enable people to get 'back up' to a place they were at before their injury.

BUT staff and volunteers (most of whom have sustained an SCI and are former service users) visit the UK's 11 specialist SCI hospitals on a regular basis to offer wheelchair-skills training to inpatients, and also to support them throughout the difficult transition from hospital to home and in adjusting to their new circumstances. BUT runs an accredited peer mentoring service, involving regular telephone and face-to-face contact, to support newly injured people in adopting a more positive outlook on their future. It also runs courses to engage service users in new challenges and to gain new skills. BUT's most recent project involves supporting the full inclusion in schools of children with a spinal cord injury.

This application seeks funds to provide Londoners who have sustained an SCI with the core adult support elements described above. Over three years, BUT would support 198 people to gain wheelchair skills; 285 people in their transition from hospital to home; mentor 70 people; and offer Back up to Work courses to increase skills and confidence in job searching skills to 9 individuals (this low target reflects current demand for this service). Other targets are determined from the number of Londoners admitted to the London and the National SCI Hospitals last year (55% in Stanmore and 35% at Stoke Mandeville respectively). Although wheelchair training is part of these hospitals' rehabilitation services, when it is provided by peers with first-hand experience of living with SCI then it is often reported to more effective.

Financial Information

For 2014/15, £640,664 (43.9%) of forecast income had been confirmed by August 2014. BUT's current strategy sets an 11% annual income growth target over five years, and the charity advises that this is the reason for the comparatively large amount of expenditure on generating funds. The charity expects this proportion to fall below 28% in two years' time.

Year end at 30 April	2013/14 Audited Accounts £	2014/15 Current Year Forecast £
Income and Expenditure		
Income	1,328,587	1,460,050
Expenditure	1,256,553	1,511,031
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	97,285	(50,981)
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(21,583)	0
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	75,703	(50,981)
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	5.7%	(3.5%)
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	430,219 (32.4%)	466,845 (32.0%)
Free unrestricted reserves		
Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End	581,105	530,124
How many months' worth of expenditure	5.5	4.2
Reserves Policy target	497,381	511,352
How many months' worth of expenditure	4.7	4.1
Free reserves over/(under) target	83,724	18,772