

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Strengthening London's Voluntary Sector****Cranfield Trust****Adv: Tim Wilson****Amount requested: £127,601****Base: Outside London****Benefit: London-wide****Amount recommended: £128,000****The Charity**

Established in 1998, Cranfield Trust provides advice and mentoring to voluntary sector organisations. This is delivered by more than 700 volunteers who use their professional expertise to help groups with their development, with support provided both on a one-to-one basis and via a dedicated web site called HRNet. Cranfield volunteers offer personalised support based on extensive experience (many are business school alumni). Most Cranfield beneficiaries are small charities.

**The Application**

Following the satisfactory end of a three year City Bridge Trust award, Cranfield now seeks two years' continuation funding to maintain and expand its support programme for London charities. During this period Cranfield will deliver 80 consultancy projects, run masterclasses for 50 organisations, recruit 40 new volunteers, and support over 400 members through the HRNet website. Work will be led by a London manager, responsible for ensuring that charities seeking assistance are matched to the right consultants able to deliver that support. The focus of work will be financial management, and monitoring and evaluation, as well as HR support.

**The Recommendation**

Cranfield Trust's work is consistently well regarded by its charity clients. It's regional managers work to match the right volunteers to the right charities, and this local knowledge allows Cranfield to meet considerable demand through its extensive volunteer base. Following a successful three year grant from City Bridge Trust, Cranfield seeks a strategic extension to its current award, and some additional funds to host a new series of masterclasses. The increased request can be justified as an investment to develop Cranfield's capacity and reach. Funding is advised as follows:

***£128,000 over two years (£66,000; £62,000) for a London-wide programme matching expert volunteers with charities seeking consultancy support.***

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
14/10/2010	£105,000 over three years towards a programme of HR and related support for London voluntary organisations.
17/05/2005	£35,600 over one year towards the costs of a capacity building programme strengthening the Voluntary Sector through the placement of professional volunteers in London.

**Background and detail of proposal**

Over 25 years, Cranfield has built a network of more than 700 expert volunteers offering free consultancy support to small charities. This volunteer model allows Cranfield to keep its cost-base relatively low whilst delivering services of substantial

value to the charity sector, services which would otherwise be unaffordable to the sector if it had to purchase from purely commercial providers.

Whilst the majority of Cranfield's clients seek support through the organisation's online, moderated, HRNet website, those who request personalised support can receive this through the consultancy volunteers. Cranfield's approach begins with a preliminary diagnostic, followed by the design and delivery of tailored support. The approach is to build the ongoing capabilities of the charity clients rather than simply 'doing the work for them' and Cranfield measures client outcomes through gathering pre- and post-intervention data. Faced with growing demand for its services, Cranfield seeks to expand its volunteer base for London operations and support more organisations both face-to-face, online and through convening special masterclasses that allow people to share their knowledge with peers.

### Financial Information

Cranfield Trust's forecast income is £474,500 in the current year 2014/15, of which £351,130 (74%) had been confirmed by 5<sup>th</sup> November. Forecast income at this level represents a rise of £127,535 (37%) over the two years since the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013 and the charity advises that this is due to its efforts to attract support from corporate and major individual donors. Over the same period, expenditure is expected to grow by £80,375 (20%) as the organisation seeks to increase the number of charities it supports.

Cranfield Trust has used its free reserves as part of its fundraising efforts and this accounts in part for the £43,950 (24%) reduction in the level of free reserves between 2012/13 and 2014/15 as shown in the table below. Reserves have also been used as Cranfield Trust has sought to increase levels of service delivery. The charity has new fundraising plans which are intended to rebuild free reserves from 2015/16 onwards.

Year end at 30 September	2012/13 Examined Accounts	2013/14 Draft Outturn	2014/15 Current Year Budget
	£	£	£
<b>Income and Expenditure</b>			
Income	346,965	346,877	474,500
Expenditure	392,600	370,552	472,975
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	22,206	(36,175)	(7,775)
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(67,841)	12,500	9,300
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	(45,635)	(23,675)	1,525
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	(13.1%)	(6.8%)	0.3%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	45,074 (12.9%)	48,000 (13.8%)	40,002 (8.4%)
<b>Free unrestricted reserves</b>			
Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End	185,137	148,962	141,187
How many months' worth of expenditure	5.7	4.8	3.6
Reserves Policy target	98,151 -294,453	92,637 - 277,911	118,245 - 354,735
How many months' worth of expenditure	3-9	3-9	3-9
Free reserves over/(under) target	86,986 -(109,316)	56,325 - (128,949)	22,942 - (213,548)