

MEETING: 28/01/2015

Ref: 12302

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London More Inclusive

Graeae Theatre Company

Adv: Julia Mirkin

Amount requested: £138,649

Base: Hackney

Benefit: London-wide

Amount recommended: £138,650

The Charity

Graeae Theatre Company (GTC) is a disabled-led company that places the skills of disabled actors, directors and writers centre stage. The first of GTC's strategic aims is to champion 'access'. It does this by creating and touring inclusive productions; delivering education and outreach work that challenges perceptions about disability; and through its Department for Work and Pensions-funded 'Access to Work' programme, helping disabled people secure work in the arts. GTC's other strategic aims are to find and develop new audiences and nurture emerging talent in inclusive theatre. GTC was established in 1980 and featured in the opening ceremony of the London Paralympics in 2012.

The Application

The proposal comprises three elements: the first, called Artistic Advisors, is an intensive programme for six young disabled people, who have already demonstrated commitment to developing their skills in theatre-related work. Participants will choose between acting, producing or marketing a new production that will be performed at least twice to an audience of 600. GTC has an impressive track-record of helping young disabled people to break into the theatre industry.

The second element of this proposal is to deliver one-off production-based workshops in London's special and integrated schools. These workshops will allow GTC to establish relationships with schools; introduce its repertoire and lay the foundations for more intensive projects. Building on this, the third element of the project is to deliver school residencies, during which 25 children will participate in a programme of 12 integrated practical sessions leading to a performance for family and friends. The residencies will train teachers in integrated theatre practice. The purpose of this programme is to bring young disabled children into contact with disabled role models; to introduce them to theatre forms which they can participate in; to recruit participants for future cohorts of Artistic Advisors; and to develop the artists and audiences of the future.

The Recommendation

£138,650 over three years (£43,300; £47,400; £47,950) towards 0.5FTE of the full-time salary costs of the Training and Learning Manager and associated programme costs of the Young Artistic Advisors, outreach and School Residencies programme.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
10/09/2009	£90,000 over three years (3 x £30,000) towards a participative programme of street arts for disabled people.
20/03/2003	£90,000 over 3 years (3 x £30,000) towards the cost of a theatre production and tour of "Missing Piece 3" with disabled adults.

Background and detail of proposal

According to The Office for Disability Issues, there are approximately 10 million people with a limiting long-term illness, impairment or disability in England. A range of physical barriers to arts participation exist for disabled people: inaccessible buildings; a lack of transport or parking; inaccessible booking systems; a lack of access facilities (hearing loops and signed performances) and financial barriers as many disabled people are on low incomes. In addition, the Centre for Disability Research at Lancaster University has described the social stigma around disability as oppressive. Young disabled people are particularly vulnerable to these physical and social barriers and low self-esteem is linked to lower levels of aspiration and attainment in education and employment. GTC's work aims to change the social barriers to theatre participation for disabled people: this programme will develop progression routes for young disabled people interested in theatre in London - either recreationally or professionally and it will champion further diversification of the theatre industry.

Financial Information

GTC's principle source of grant funding is from the Arts Council England, which requires GTC to produce two shows per year. Additional shows are also produced which span financial years and the charity advises that this can create financial fluctuations year-on-year. The production 'Blood Wedding' will take place over 2014/15 and 2015/16, of which the majority of income from box off sales and production costs are included in 2014/15.

Total income in the current year 2014/15 is forecast to be £1,228,207, of which £1,060,530 (86.3%) had been confirmed by October 2014. In the following year, total income is predicted to be £913,934, of which £710,130 (77.7%) had been confirmed by October 2014.

Year end at 31 March	2013/14 Audited Accounts £	2014/15 Current Year Forecast £	2015/16 Following Year Budget £
Income and Expenditure			
Income	1,096,251	1,228,207	913,934
Expenditure	1,142,280	1,433,259	977,307
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(6,352)	(141,003)	(63,193)
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(39,677)	(64,049)	-
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	(46,029)	(205,052)	(63,193)
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	(4.2%)	(16.7%)	(6.9%)
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	97,530 (8.9%)	-	
Free unrestricted reserves			
Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End	507,462	366,459	303,266
How many months' worth of expenditure	5.3	3.1	3.7
Reserves Policy target	571,140	716,630	488,654
How many months' worth of expenditure	6.0	6.0	6.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(63,678)	(350,171)	(185,388)