

MEETING: 12/03/2015

Ref: 12545

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Older Londoners

AESOP Arts and Society Limited

Adv: Julia Mirkin

Amount requested: £45,887

Base: Outside London

Benefit: Lambeth

Amount recommended: £45,900

The Charity

Inspired by his work as a grant-maker, AESOP developed from Tim Joss's belief that artistic approaches can offer new solutions to social and health-related problems. Initially AESOP was hosted by The Rayne Foundation, for which Tim Joss held the post of Director from 2005. It registered as a charity in 2010 and currently coordinates a UK network for arts and health research, with funding from the Lankelly Chase Foundation. It delivers projects with a social or health related purpose. AESOP became independent of The Rayne Foundation in July 2014 and is still developing operationally. Progress to date, however, is impressive, with funding secured from the Wellcome Trust and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

The Application

The proposal before you builds on empirical research into fall-prevention amongst older people, which led to the development of clinically recognised exercise programmes. However, the exercise programmes developed, although effective, are considered boring by participants, and institutions struggle to engage their beneficiaries for long enough to reap the benefits. This proposal is a pilot to deliver specialised exercise programmes through dance and to test whether drop-out rates are reduced. Two six-month programmes will be delivered, drawing on the expertise of East London Dance (ELD), a Stratford-based dance agency recognised for its work with older people. Apart from being a strong fit to the outcomes of your Older Londoners programme, this project will contribute to a larger research project, through which it is hoped that an improved fall-prevention exercise package will be developed for use in the health sector.

The Recommendation

Currently, the organisation's reserves are below target, which, given the speed of expansion, may be a cause for concern in the longer-term. However, as funds are requested for only one year, this is not considered a risk to the proposed project. As the AESOP currently has no treasurer, it is advised (should you decide to award a grant) that you make grant instalments in quarters 3 and 4 contingent on the recruitment of a treasurer, which would support the development of financial systems and the organisation as whole. This has been discussed with the charity:

£45,900 over one year towards the choreographic commission, and delivery and evaluation, of the Dance to Health programme at the AmicusHorizon Sheltered Housing Scheme in Lambeth and the Redbridge Jewish Community Centre.

Funding History

None

Background and detail of proposal

The fall-reduction exercise programmes, 'FaME/PSI' and 'Otago', have been shown to reduced falls by 35%. However, the drop-out rate for beneficiaries is high, leading to many health services rejecting them. AESOP's 'Dance to Health' programme aims

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to make fall-prevention exercises more attractive to older people by embedding them in choreography, allowing them to exercise in a creative and social environment.

ELD will recruit beneficiaries, oversee the choreographic commission and provide Dance Artists to deliver regular sessions at the two locations. *Leap of Faith*, one of ELD's amateur dance groups for older people, will provide Peer Motivators to support programme participants. Choreographer, Jennifer Irons, will create new dance material based on the two evidence-based exercise programmes: Jennifer is a long-standing associate artist with East London Dance and currently performs with the dance company, CandoCo. Each dance programme will culminate in a live performance at the Lost Theatre in Wandsworth.

Dawn Skelton, Professor in Ageing and Health at Glasgow Caledonian University, co-authored the FaME research trial, on which the PSI fall-prevention course is based. Professor Skelton will deliver quality-assured training to Jennifer Irons, project Choreographer, to the Dance Artists who will deliver the dance programme and to the Peer Motivators. This project will feed into a larger, overarching, evaluation of delivering fall-prevention courses through dance. It is hoped that a new method of delivering fall-reduction exercise will be developed and tested through this project, and which can be rolled out to health institutions across London and beyond.

Financial Information

Forecast income in the current year is £172,595, of which £167,595 (97%) had been confirmed by February 2015. The table below shows that the charity hopes to significantly expand its operation in the forthcoming year 2015/16 with forecast income increasing by £265,595 (154%) to £438,190. Of this income, £53,010 (12%) had been confirmed by February 2015. The charity has advised that it has a number of funding bids, either submitted or in preparation, to raise the balance of £385,180 (88%), including this application to City Bridge Trust. Expenditure is also forecast to grow in 2015/16, by £379,060 (367%) to £482,277, which would result in an overall deficit of £44,087 (10.1% of turnover) for the year. The charity has a reserves policy to hold 3 months' worth of expenditure in free reserves, which it aims to achieve over the next 4 years.

Year end at 31 March	2013/14 Independently Examined Accounts £	2014/15 Current Year Budget £	2015/16 Following year budget £
Income and Expenditure			
Income	18,710	172,595	438,190
Expenditure	17,850	103,217	482,277
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	9,611	13,609	122,057
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(8,751)	55,769	(166,144)
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	860	69,378	(44,087)
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	4.6%	40.2%	10.1%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	Not disclosed	11,038 (6.4%)	34,789 (7.9%)
Free unrestricted reserves			
Free unrestricted reserves held at Year End	10,136	23,135	59,166
How many months' worth of expenditure	6.8	2.7	1.5
Reserves Policy target			
How many months' worth of expenditure	No policy set	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	-	2,668	(61,404)