

MEETING: 23/09/2015

Ref: 12808

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London More Inclusive

Royal Academy of Dance

Amount requested: £146,971

Amount recommended: £146,900

Adv: Julia Mirkin

Base: Wandsworth

Benefit: London-wide

The Charity

The Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) is based in Battersea and was established in 1920 to regulate standards in dance teacher training through the provision of education and continuing professional development (CPD). It is best known, however, as an awarding organisation for a portfolio of dance examinations, based on the RAD syllabus, which is delivered in registered centres across the world. The RAD is currently in negotiations with a property developer about a possible relocation to a new building in 2018/19 that would offer more studios and a performance space. The organisation's new five-year business plan includes wider community engagement as one of its revised strategic objectives.

The Application

Funds are requested to expand and develop the RADiate project for local children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), particularly autism and Asperger's.

The Recommendation

The RAD is one of the world's most distinguished dance education institutions. This proposal sees it developing its community engagement work, introducing dance to disadvantaged and disabled children and developing its expertise in integrated practice.

£146,900 over three years (£50,650; £45,000; £51,250) towards tutors' fees; RADiate delivery costs; and production costs for two films about the RADiate project - one for promotional and one for training purposes.

Funding History

None

Background and detail of proposal

The proposal to expand and develop the RADiate programme for children with SEN, involves increasing the number of local schools in which RADiate is delivered (ten schools in the first year across three boroughs, increasing to 15 schools by year three, across five boroughs); it also involves a recruitment drive for new SEN teachers; CPD specifically for RADiate tutors; paid development and evaluation time; and the production of two films, one for training and one for promotional purposes.

A high staff to child ratio and small class sizes renders RADiate sessions expensive. Classes have a maximum of nine children (RADiate will engage with a minimum of 235 SEN children each year) and the lead tutor is supported by an assistant teacher and one of the RAD's full-time students. Classes are one hour in duration and are delivered weekly during term-time. Classes culminate with an informal performance for friends and family at the end of each term. The lead tutor for RADiate has worked with eminent integrated companies, such as Amici, CandoCo and Shape; She has performed professionally and is a script writer for the BBC's Schools Radio Dance programmes, 'Time to Move' and 'Let's Move'.

RAD's community work is currently represented by direct annual expenditure of c.£850K. However, as many of the tutors and administrators are salaried, this figure is considered to be higher in real terms. In addition to RADiate, the Community Engagement programme comprises the London-wide 'Step into Dance' programme for secondary school children; the 'Dance for Life Wellbeing' programme for older people (for which Garfield Weston is funding an external evaluation) and the 'Genée International Ballet Competition'.

The desire to expand and develop community engagement and to be more reflective of the breadth of the dance sector is mirrored by the bold move taken to modernise the RAD syllabi. The new syllabi, which were introduced three years ago, have been informed by modern pedagogical and artistic approaches and aim to provide a more direct route to a professional dance teaching career. Transition to the new RAD syllabi was a challenging and time-consuming process: teachers required retraining and more time was required to prepare students for the new exams, which resulted in a significant drop in income from exam fees during 2013/14. This drop in income was absorbed by the RAD's reserves, which are still recovering year on year.

Financial Information

Forecast income for the current year 2015/16 is £21,282m. RAD advised that as the financial year has just commenced and income is generated throughout the year, it is unable to provide confirmation of secured income. This will be available in October when its international offices report actual income at the end of quarter one.

The charity advised that its cost of generating funds is low as the majority of its income (96% in 2014/15) is earned through education and training services. However the charity expects this figure to be higher in future years as it has recently established a fundraising team and is implementing a more sustainable and strategic approach to fundraising activities.

Year end at 31 July	13/14 Audited Accounts	14/15 Budget	15/16 Current Yr Budget
Income and Expenditure	£	£	£
Income	20,463,000	21,294,615	21,282,000
Expenditure	19,945,000	20,565,905	20,699,000
Other recognised gains losses	794,000	-	-
Unrestricted Funds	496,000	631,062	575,000
Surplus / (Deficit)			
Restricted Funds	22,000	97,648	8,000
Surplus / (Deficit)			
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	1,312,000	728,710	583,000
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	6.4%	3.4%	2.7%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	190,000 (0.9%)	-	-
Free unrestricted reserves			
Free unrestricted reserves held at Year End	1,652,814	2,283,876	2,858,876
months' worth of expenditure	1.0	1.3	1.7
Reserves Policy target	2,689,591	2,689,591	2,689,591
Months' worth of expenditure	1.6	1.6	1.6
Free reserves over/(under) target	(1,036,777)	(405,715)	169,285