

MEETING: 26/11/2015

Ref: 12917

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Strengthening London's Voluntary Sector

Interlink Foundation

Adv: Jenny Field

Amount requested: £80,000

Base: Hackney

Amount recommended: £80,000

Benefit: North London boroughs

The Charity

Established in 1990, Interlink Foundation is the infrastructure organisation serving the Orthodox Jewish (Charedi) voluntary and community sector, operating in London and in Manchester. Its London offices are based close to the border of Hackney and Haringey and it is the intention to open a satellite office in Barnet in order to improve the service offered to local groups in that area.

The Application

Interlink Foundation has been instrumental in enabling the Charedi voluntary sector to collaborate with the wider voluntary sector in order to meet the needs of members of their own community and beyond. In April 2012, you approved a grant of £120,000 over three years towards a project developing partnerships between Charedi community groups and mainstream organisations. This application requests funding for a further two years. Whilst three years is the maximum period that you will usually fund a particular activity or project within an organisation, your policies allow you to consider funding for a further two years, work which is of strategic importance to London. You have taken the view that infrastructure support for the sector, whether local, sub-regional or London-wide, meets that criterion.

The Recommendation

Interlink Foundation has established a good reputation for the quality of its work and is one of London's key infrastructure organisations. During the past three years, it has established strong partnerships between Charedi community groups and mainstream organisations, such as London Youth, National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, KIDS and Age UK, amongst others. Funding has enabled it to establish its Community Interest Company as a subsidiary through which it leads its member organisations in making consortia bids for public sector contracts. It currently manages 5 consortia and in addition it works closely with borough based consortia bidding vehicles in Hackney and Haringey. It is a steering group member of both City and Hackney Together and Together North London. Funding for a further two years would enable it to build on this valuable work.

£80,000 over two years (2 x £40,000) towards the salary and related running costs of a project supporting partnership and collaboration amongst Charedi organisations in North London.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
26/04/2012	£120,000 over three years (3 x £40,000) towards the salary and associated running costs of a project developing partnerships between Charedi community groups and mainstream organisations which tackle disadvantage and create opportunities for everyone.
22/01/2009	£80,000 over two years (2 X £40,000) towards the salary and related running costs of 2 part-time Development officers to support Orthodox Jewish community organisations improve their organisational and management skills.
17/05/2005	£120,000 over three years (3 x £40,000) towards salary and running costs of 2 part-time Development Officers to support Orthodox Jewish community organisations improve their organisation and management skills.

Background and detail of proposal

After more than a decade of Interlink's work to raise awareness of the needs of the Orthodox Jewish community, Charedi disadvantage is now well documented. The report by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research in 2011 *Child Poverty in the British Jewish Community* used Census data to identify that over a quarter of Jews in Hackney were living in overcrowded conditions and the percentage of Hackney Jews with no qualifications in the 16-49 age band was approximately 40%.

During the past three years of the Trust's grant there have been a number of key achievements. These include more Charedi organisations working outside their own community, in partnership with the wider voluntary sector and the public sector. This strategically important shift marks a change in how the Charedi voluntary sector interacts with the wider civil society. It has enabled several new partnerships to be formed to address socio-economic needs, such as worklessness (with more Charedi people accessing training and employment advice and moving into employment); services for young people (through partnership with key youth organisations); and transitioning disabled people into independent living (by bringing together Charedi organisations with local authorities, colleges and mainstream voluntary sector providers with disabled people and their carers, in order to promote the development of services and greater participation).

Financial Information

Forecast income in the current year is £851,494 of which £278,794 (33% had been confirmed by 6th November 2015).

Interlink's Cost of Generating Funds appears low. It represents the amount of staff time spent on fundraising activities, principally in the form of grant applications to trusts and foundations, together with modest publicity costs. However, it probably also should include the amount of staff time spent on tendering for training, consultation and other contracts to deliver public services in partnership with local voluntary organisations. This has been raised with the organisation which has undertaken to review how it calculates this cost.

Year end at 31 March	2013/14 Audited Accounts	2014/15 Draft Accounts	2015/16 Current Year Budget
	£	£	£
Income and Expenditure			
Income	700,230	808,444	851,494
Expenditure	715,947	740,763	851,112
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	17,216	25,090	67,115
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(32,933)	42,591	(66,733)
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	(15,717)	67,681	382
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	(2.2%)	8.4%	0%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	10,437 (1.5%)	6,708 (0.8%)	7,911 (0.9%)
Free unrestricted reserves			
Free unrestricted reserves held at Year End	171,492	170,579	237,694
How many months' worth of expenditure	2.9	2.8	3.4
Reserves Policy target	178,986	185,190	212,778
How many months' worth of expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(7,494)	(14,611)	24,916