

The City Bridge Trust

Investing In Londoners: Application for a grant



About your organisation

Name of your organisation: Mary Ward Legal Centre	
If your organisation is part of a larger organisation, what is its name? The Mary Ward Settlement	
In which London Borough is your organisation based? Camden	
Contact person: Ms Tina Neessen	Position: Director (Acting)
Website: http://www.marywardlegal.org.uk	
Legal status of organisation: Registered Charity	Charity, Charitable Incorporated Company or company number: 1024148
When was your organisation established? 25/01/1993	

Grant Request

Under which of City Bridge Trust's programmes are you applying? Reducing Poverty
Which of the programme outcome(s) does your application aim to achieve? More people accessing debt and legal services More Londoners with improved economic circumstances
Please describe the purpose of your funding request in one sentence. To provide specialist advice and support around complex issues on welfare rights, benefits and housing for vulnerable individuals in London.
When will the funding be required? 30/04/2016
How much funding are you requesting? Year 1: £42,136 Year 2: £41,438 Year 3: £42,234 Total: £125,808

Aims of your organisation:

We believe that everyone should have access to advice and representation to enable them to secure their rights. Our purpose is to provide free specialist legal advice and representation to Londoners in need.

Main activities of your organisation:

The Mary Ward Legal Centre is a pan-London charity providing free legal advice and casework to people most severely affected by poverty and discrimination who otherwise could not afford to enforce their legal rights. We focus on social welfare law in: housing, debt, and welfare rights. We also run a financial capability programme to individuals to increase their financial literacy and money skills and are developing a similar programme on welfare rights. We aim to tackle poverty and disadvantage through maximising incomes, reducing debts, challenging discrimination, saving homes and jobs and improving general wellbeing. Over 40% of our clients are sick and/or disabled, over 60% are from BAME communities. Many do not have English as their first language and very few have any understanding of legal processes. Clients often approach us with multiple issues and require support on a number of different matters in order to resolve them. Many have been referred to us by other agencies.

Number of staff

Full-time:	Part-time:	Management committee members:	Active volunteers:
14	11	13	52

Property occupied by your organisation

Is the main property owned, leased or rented by your organisation?	If leased/rented, how long is the outstanding agreement?
Rented	10 years

Summary of grant request

Our aim is to enable more people in London to access the debt and legal advice and support they need on complex issues related to welfare benefits, housing and tax credit problems. We will do this by employing a full-time welfare benefits caseworker who will provide free advice and casework. We will target those most severely affected by poverty and discrimination who are resident in central London boroughs. This includes people with disabilities, those on a low income affected by welfare reform, and ethnic minorities.

The caseworker will train and support a team of volunteers who will support the programme by providing a triage service taking relevant information about clients and then supporting them in completing forms and following-up with them for outcomes and to remind them of appointments.

We estimate that 150 individuals will benefit from advice and/or casework each year of the project. Each receiving an estimated 3-12 hours of support. 50 of these individuals will be supported by casework by the Welfare Benefits Caseworker & Volunteer Supervisor.

Our intention is to tackle some of the causes of poverty and disadvantage amongst these individuals enabling them to enjoy increased levels of economic wellbeing and live free from poverty. The consequence of this will be that they will have increased health, wellbeing and independence with, for example, those in danger of losing their homes reporting being able to keep them.

We have experienced a very significant rise in individuals seeking support around issues related to welfare benefits largely the result of recent and forthcoming welfare reforms and also due to a diminishing number of advice organisations in central London offering welfare benefits advice.

The design of this service has been informed by our many years of delivering legal advice and we will proactively encourage clients to suggest ways of developing it further. We will capture immediate outcome data on all our clients and follow-up with a sample to ascertain longer-term outcomes and write these up as case studies. We will share the learning from the project with other legal centres through our involvement in Capitalise, the London-wide debt advice partnership.

The Mary Ward Legal Centre has an excellent reputation and extensive experience of working with disadvantaged people. Last year we provided support to more than 4,000 vulnerable individuals of whom over 40% had a disability and around two-thirds were from BAME groups. Our contact with clients can be over a long period of time involving multiple interviews and then lengthy negotiations with the other side in the dispute and this can lead to our representation at court and social security appeals tribunals. However, much of our work involves trying to resolve matters to prevent them reaching court in the first place. Of the cases we take on around 90% result in a positive outcome. Specific outcomes which our activities achieved over the last 12 months include:

- For clients seeking advice about their benefits entitlement, an average increase of £84 a week in benefits
- Over £950,000 of client debts written off
- 90% of welfare benefits appeals found in the claimant's favour

We have 25 paid staff including 5 solicitors and 10 caseworkers. Currently 43% of paid staff are from BAME backgrounds including 3 out of 4 team leaders. We also have support from a pro-bono pool of more than 40 volunteer lawyers. We make sure these volunteers are supported, their efforts coordinated and contributions celebrated.

We adopted a sustainability policy in December 2010 developed in partnership with Camden Climate Change. This commits us to continually reviewing and improving our environmental performance.

If you need any planning or other statutory consents for the project to proceed, what stage have the applications reached?

Do you have a Vulnerable Adults policy? **Yes**

What Quality Marks does your organisation currently hold?

Specialist Quality Mark accreditation with the Legal Services Commission.

Outputs and outcomes

What are the main activities or outputs you want to deliver? Please include no more than 5. By activities or outputs we mean the services, products or facilities you plan to deliver. If you plan to deliver work over more than one year you should include activities over the full grant period requested. Try to be specific.

Individual advice sessions given to target clients by a specialist advisor

Advocating on behalf of clients to assist them to challenge a decision to refuse, stop or suspend welfare benefits and representing them in courts as necessary

Providing individual support in writing letters and preparing phone calls to challenge benefits decisions through support offered by volunteers

What main differences or outcomes do you hope the activities you have described above will achieve? Please include no more than 5. By differences or outcomes we mean the changes, benefits, learning or other effects that result from the work your project would deliver. These might be for individuals, families, communities or the environment.

Clients have increased levels of economic wellbeing and are able to live free from poverty as benefits are secured and incomes are maximised.

Clients have increased levels of health, wellbeing and independence.

Clients have an increased ability to sustain homes and avoid homelessness.

Do you plan to continue the activity beyond the period for which you are requesting funding? If so, how do you intend to sustain it? If not, what is your exit strategy?

We plan to continue this service after the funding period. We will use evidence of the project's impacts on clients to demonstrate its value and outcomes to other funders. We continuously identify new sources of funding and have been successful in securing these. Our fundraising strategy has enabled us to replace significant grant funding previously provided through legal aid.

Who will benefit?

About your beneficiaries

How many people will benefit directly from the grant per year?

150

In which Greater London borough(s) or areas of London will your beneficiaries live?

Camden (50%)

Islington (30%)

Tower Hamlets (10%)

Westminster (10%)

What age group(s) will benefit?

16-24

25-44

45-64

65-74

75 and over

What gender will beneficiaries be?

All

What will the ethnic grouping(s) of the beneficiaries be?

A range of ethnic groups

If Other ethnic group, please give details:

What proportion of the beneficiaries will be disabled people?

21-30%

Funding required for the project

What is the total cost of the proposed activity/project?

Expenditure heading	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Salary for welfare benefits caseworker & volunteer coordinator incl National Insurance and Pension	34,362	35,071	35,795	105,228
Supervision and management	5,174	3,767	3,839	12,780
Training of volunteers	600	600	600	1,800
Volunteer expenses	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000
Administration and triage	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
Support costs for clients	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0

TOTAL:	44,136	43,438	44,234	131,808
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What income has already been raised?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
The Mary Ward Settlement	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
	0	0	0	0

TOTAL:	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
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What other funders are currently considering the proposal?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
	0	0	0	0

TOTAL:	0	0	0	0
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How much is requested from the Trust?

Expenditure heading	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Salary for welfare benefits caseworker incl National Insurance and Pension	34,362	35,071	35,795	105,228
Supervision and management	5,174	3,767	3,839	12,780
Training of volunteers	600	600	600	1,800
Volunteer expenses	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000
Administration and triage	0	0	0	0
Support costs for clients	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000
	0	0	0	0

TOTAL:	42,136	41,438	42,234	125,808
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Finance details

Please complete using your most recent audited or independently examined accounts.

Financial year ended:	Month: July	Year: 2015
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Income received from:	£
Voluntary income	167,655
Activities for generating funds	0
Investment income	888
Income from charitable activities	0
Other sources	883,738
Total Income:	1,052,281

Expenditure:	£
Charitable activities	1,008,460
Governance costs	9,250
Cost of generating funds	0
Other	0
Total Expenditure:	1,017,710
Net (deficit)/surplus:	34,571
Other Recognised Gains/(Losses):	0
Net Movement in Funds:	34,571

Asset position at year end	£
Fixed assets	546
Investments	0
Net current assets	445,513
Long-term liabilities	123,757
*Total Assets (A):	322,302

Reserves at year end	£
Endowment funds	0
Restricted funds	0
Unrestricted funds	322,302
*Total Reserves (B):	322,302

*** Please note that total Assets (A) and Total Reserves (B) should be the same.**

Statutory funding

For your most recent financial year, what % of your income was from statutory sources? 11-20%
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Organisational changes

Describe any significant changes to your structure, financial position or core activities since the date of your most recent accounts: N/A

Previous funding received

Please list the funding received by your organisation from the following statutory sources during the last THREE years.

	2012 £	2013 £	2014 £
City of London (except City Bridge Trust)	0	0	0
London Local Authorities	187,000	195,917	311,960
London Councils	0	0	0
Health Authorities	0	0	0
Central Government departments	0	0	0
Other statutory bodies	480,776	243,956	208,545

Previous grants received

Please list the grants received by your organisation from charitable trusts and foundations (other than City Bridge Trust) during the last THREE years. List source, years and annual amounts. Please include the 5 largest only.

Name of Funder	2012 £	2013 £	2014 £
Trust for London	26,500	26,500	19,875
Farrer & Co Charitable Trust	0	0	5,000
The Legal Education Trust	0	9,333	19,667
St Andrew's Holborn	3,300	6,700	0
St Giles	0	7,000	6,000

Declaration

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, all the information I have provided in this application form is correct. I fully understand that City Bridge Trust has zero tolerance towards fraud and will seek to prosecute and recover funds in every instance.

Please confirm: Yes Full Name: **Tina Neessen**

Role within **Director (Acting)**
Organisation: