

The City Bridge Trust

Investing In Londoners: Application for a grant



About your organisation

Name of your organisation: South West London Law Centres	
If your organisation is part of a larger organisation, what is its name? NO	
In which London Borough is your organisation based? Croydon	
Contact person: Mr Patrick Marples	Position: CEO
Website: http://www.swllc.org	
Legal status of organisation: Registered Charity	Charity, Charitable Incorporated Company or company number: 1102433
When was your organisation established? 02/03/2004	

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. Volunteers are our 'underused' main support. Boosting this will help SWLLC to continue to support 1000s of vulnerable Londoners struggling with housing / debt issues.
When will the funding be required? 01/11/2016
How much funding are you requesting? Year 1: £58,582 Year 2: £59,098 Year 3: £59,620 Total: £177,300

Aims of your organisation:

South West London Law Centres (SWLLC) is a community based, legal practice working to relieve poverty, suffering and distress for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our communities, in need of help at difficult times in their lives to resolve legal problems. Our support ranges from free legal advice through to representation in social welfare law at court. Able to trace our roots back to 1974, SWLLC itself was formed by a merger of four law centres in 2004 and now covers six London boroughs: Wandsworth, Merton, Croydon, Sutton, Kingston and Richmond. People also come from further afield to request our expert support, as can be seen in our most recent annual reports at <http://www.swllc.org/AboutSWLLC.php>. In 2015/16 we assisted 8,753 clients with direct face to face services and received over 30,000 calls for assistance. The main services we offer are full specialist casework, emergency representation under Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme, and the largest area: pro-bono advice clinics.

Main activities of your organisation:

We place a strong emphasis on taking time to ascertain each client's situation to meet all their legal needs and not just their most pressing problem. Our expertise means we do this but want to go further than this. Currently:

- 1) Specialist legal casework in community care, debt, employment, housing, immigration, asylum, public law and welfare rights run from 4 offices in Battersea, Morden, East Croydon and Kingston, through to courts / tribunals. Income comes from legal aid, some grants & some charging.
- 2) Emergency housing representation across 3 county courts: Croydon, Wandsworth and Kingston with a housing team of 11, helping 1,681 clients to defend themselves against possession / home evictions in 2015/16.
- 3) With one of the largest pro bono clinic services across England, we deliver 15 free clinics across 6 sites weekly offering initial advice on a wide range of civil / legal problems. 80 day-time volunteers and 420 evening pro-bono lawyers helped 4,447 clients in 2015/16.

Number of staff

Full-time:	Part-time:	Management committee members:	Active volunteers:
24	11	12	500

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?
Leased	4.5 years to 30 June 2020

Summary of grant request

SWLLC now runs one of the largest pro bono clinic services in the country, encouraging clients to take better steps to resolve problems themselves with some limited follow-up by advisers. Clinics cover a wide range of issues but predominately cover aspects of housing and debt law, with 400 volunteer lawyers supporting over 18 clinics per week assisting 4,477 people in 2015/16. People attend our clinics because they need a legal problem sorting out, and cannot afford a lawyer, with the issue going beyond what a generalist advice agency can deal with. Run from four offices in Battersea, Morden, East Croydon and Kingston; volunteers help in every aspect of our work. In particular they support the two largest casework teams in our law centre - housing (11 lawyers) and debt (4 caseworkers) -- helping 2,736 people with casework and representation in 2015/16 through a pool of 80 volunteers for day time services (having recruited 46 new volunteers last year) and 420 pro-bono lawyers for our evening clinics. All help with branch administration, progressing casework, or expert volunteer legal support which means we will reach 4,000 people in 2016.

Our clinic system works well. We see a high volume of vulnerable people needing help to emerge from poverty but to do this, our limited resources need to be used more effectively. Currently each clinic has oversight from our Client Services Manager responsible for ALL incoming work into the law centre, including volunteer support, but he is struggling to manage a steady stream of requests from volunteers (students, work placement, professionals and community) seeking to give back to their local communities. By strengthening our housing and debt volunteer resources, SWLLC will be able to deliver the bulk of our free legal advice to more vulnerable people on a continued basis.

There are two systems issues that need addressing to achieve this. One is improved volunteer retention and support processes. By offering more practical, direct supervision for volunteers so we can deliver more consistent support for SWLLC volunteers across remote sites, different teams, and approaches. This will mean clients benefit from more consistent follow-through support and volunteers potentially commit to longer service periods. The second system issue is the need for a forward looking supporter scheme to develop new income generation areas, build volunteer support for specialist areas, and consider new ways in which SWLLC can ensure volunteering continues to be the most important element of our services. We hope volunteers will contribute more actively to decision-making and to gain additional unrestricted income to fund future debt and housing services.

By bringing in a new Client Services Support Worker (CSSW), we can free up the Client Services Manager (CSM) who currently combines two key jobs as Volunteer Services Manager and Office Manager, to this effect. The new CSSW could concentrate on the volunteering operational / monitoring aspects which would release the CSM to concentrate on strategic management of our volunteer programme, focusing on the less formalised housing and debt clinics. During the initial phase, the Client Services Manager would concentrate on consultation across our network of volunteers, development of existing resources (database & skill-sets), and deliver suitable options for Board consideration.

Without this new crucial CSSW post, we will be unable to put in place SWLLC growth plans based on a realistic assessment of need. Our current scale of operations has meant we have reached a tipping point -- if we do not bring in more staff, we will need to scale back clinics and put on hold further housing and debt developments such as the Rent Deposit Clinics.

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?

The Law Centre has SAFEGUARDING POLICY PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS - amongst other policies

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.

4,000 people per annum are more aware of their legal rights and responsibilities (focus on housing and debt)

Maintain base of 400 pro bono and 80-day time volunteers enabling the law centre to assist 9,000 people per annum

Set up a new supporters scheme which will receive 3 newsletters per annum

Raise £21,000 per annum through additional activities led by the supporters scheme

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.

Ensure continued wrap-around service delivery in debt, housing and money support for 1000s of vulnerable clients each year, by making our volunteer support more consistent across all our pro-bono clinics, which would allow more people to access free local legal support, improving their access to debt and legal services.

Ensure 1000s of Londoners improve their housing and financial situations by better understanding their rights and responsibilities, managing their legal position, as being supported to advocate on debt / housing concerns. Managing volunteers systematically would deliver casework faster, update clients more regularly, and reduce waiting time for such support.

More systematic in how we monitor and track client project outcomes, making sure services are more relevant to vulnerable Londoners seeking money, housing or debt solutions. Not only could we follow up clients to map histories, interventions & outcomes in a more structured fashion. Also do similar for volunteers

By organising the team better to offer more practical, direct supervision for volunteers, we can improve our volunteer retention / support processes, so volunteers feel more part of our team, leading to positive consequences such as clients benefiting from more consistent follow-through support (volunteers committing to longer periods).

Ensure new Volunteer Support Team develops longer-term peer-led 'supporter' scheme through a mix of focus groups, consultation and action plan, drawing on volunteers involved with us or those who have left (for whatever reason). By building this crucial supporter base we will ensure more sustainable housing & debt services

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?

Yes. One key avenue for further support is the development of a volunteer supporter base which we hope will provide a revenue stream, after two years' investment of time and effort. Other avenues include improved public relations, further funding and expansion of charging work.

Who will benefit?

About your beneficiaries

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

4,000

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

Croydon (35%)

Wandsworth (30%)

Merton (20%)

Kingston (10%)

Lambeth (5%)

What age group(s) will benefit?

All ages

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
Volunteer & Pro Bono Clinic Project Staff	77,861	78,640	79,426	235,927
Share of non allocated staff costs	32,075	32,396	32,720	97,191
Share of overhead costs	35,307	35,660	36,017	106,984
Training	500	500	500	1,500
Volunteer Expenses	4,000	4,000	4,000	12,000
FRU Membership	80	80	80	240
Adviser Net	2,381	2,381	2,381	7,143
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:	152,204	153,657	155,124	460,985

What income has already been raised?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Donations from City firms	46,622	40,559	34,504	121,685
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:	46,622	40,559	34,504	121,685

What other funders are currently considering the proposal?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Croydon Council	40,000	40,000	40,000	160,000
Sponsored activities	7,000	14,000	21,000	42,000
TOTAL:	47,000	54,000	61,000	202,000

How much is requested from the Trust?

Expenditure heading	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Client Services Support Worker Salary, Ni & Pension	27,895	28,174	28,456	84,525
Share of non allocated staff costs	11,294	11,407	11,521	34,222
Share of overhead costs	12,432	12,556	12,682	37,670
Training	500	500	500	1,500
Volunteer Expenses	4,000	4,000	4,000	12,000
FRU Membership	80	80	80	240
Adviser Net	2,381	2,381	2,381	7,143
TOTAL:	58,582	59,098	59,620	177,300

Finance details

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

Financial year ended:	Month: March	Year: 2016
-----------------------	------------------------	----------------------

Income received from:	£
Voluntary income	202,184
Activities for generating funds	0
Investment income	14
Income from charitable activities	1,002,542
Other sources	0
Total Income:	1,204,740

Expenditure:	£
Charitable activities	1,159,950
Governance costs	8,584
Cost of generating funds	60,411
Other	0
Total Expenditure:	1,228,945
Net (deficit)/surplus:	-24,205
Other Recognised Gains/(Losses):	0
Net Movement in Funds:	-24,205

Asset position at year end	£
Fixed assets	12,060
Investments	0
Net current assets	284,108
Long-term liabilities	0
*Total Assets (A):	296,168

Reserves at year end	£
Restricted funds	4,000
Endowment Funds	0
Unrestricted funds	292,168
*Total Reserves (B):	296,168

*** 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?
1-10%

Organisational changes

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

Last year we were able to overcome one of the major difficulties that faced the law centre in getting new premises in both Wandsworth and Croydon. This has brought the law centre back together again and has at last overcome a lot of the space issues that we faced. We are also taking steps to address the deficit in the last audited accounts

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	54,000	61,500	103,534
London Councils	0	0	0
Health Authorities	0	0	0
Central Government departments	857,602	743,296	700,000
Other statutory bodies	0	0	0

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 £
Capitalise (Money Advice Service)	120,000	120,987	163,115
Lottery	21,027	27,050	21,642
London Legal Support Trust	25,000	2,000	10,000
Trust for London	20,070	13,380	6,690
Access to Justice Foundation	0	15,000	10,000

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: **Patrick Michael Sebastian Marples**

Role within **CEO**
Organisation: