

The City Bridge Trust

Investing In Londoners: Application for a grant



About your organisation

Name of your organisation: Legal Advice Centre (University House)	
If your organisation is part of a larger organisation, what is its name? N/A	
In which London Borough is your organisation based? Tower Hamlets	
Contact person: Mrs Shahanara Begum	Position: Solicitor
Website: http://www.legaladvicecentre.org.uk	
Legal status of organisation: Registered Charity	Charity, Charitable Incorporated Company or company number: 1061182
When was your organisation established? 25/02/1997	

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 Londoners with improved economic circumstances Fewer Londoners experiencing food poverty		
Please describe the purpose of your funding request in one sentence. Provide an advocacy service at tribunal level for people with health problems. Work with voluntary organisations to improve their capacity to deliver advocacy and representation.		
When will the funding be required? 01/05/2017		
How much funding are you requesting?		
Year 1: £42,908	Year 2: £42,908	Year 3: £42,908
Total: £128,724		

Aims of your organisation:

The Charity's objects are to relieve poverty by providing legal advice and assistance to needy persons' resident in the East End of London, and in furtherance of this object and ancillary thereto, to institute, conduct and defend any proceedings before any Court or tribunal.

There are very few organisations in the East End of London who provide legal advice and casework to a specialist level. There is nothing in Newham. Last year we opened 2000 full cases. The majority of our users come from our local Bangladeshi and Somali communities. The area we serve has the highest rate of child poverty in the UK (CPAG).

We are part of the Tower Hamlets Community Advice Network. We work with the network to ensure access to justice for as many people as possible. We accept fast-track referrals from local organisations in order to ensure people are represented at the First-tier Tribunals. We also supply extensive second-tier support to local community organisations.

Main activities of your organisation:

We provide free and independent legal advice service to people in East London.

Last year(2016) included a number of 'firsts' for us. In February, we started Family Law Clinic- a partnership project involving 6 pro-bono law firms with focus on domestic violence matters. We take referrals from organisations throughout Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Newham. Within its first 6-months it was nominated for two national awards. In March, we run an advertising campaign on London Overground network- highlighting our work around Access to Justice. In April, we opened our 'Hybrid' charity shop in Bow, which acts as an open-access point to our services for local people. In May, we went 'live' with our Medico/Legal Project- working with number of health centres in Bow to embed specialist lawyers with them, which enables GPs to offer their patients legal interventions. In July, we were invited by the All Party Parliamentary Group on PLE to make presentation about our project on Access to Justice.

Number of staff

Full-time:	Part-time:	Management committee members:	Active volunteers:
5	5	12	200

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	Indefinite

Summary of grant request

We are seeking funding to expand the capacity and scope of our existing Advocacy Project by developing collaborations and partnership working, and in doing so, we wish to become a volunteer/pro bono hub. We will also be working with other voluntary sector organisations to help them to increase capacity and improve their advocacy and representation skills by allowing access to our training, practical support to develop their volunteer systems and advocacy skills.

In the East End of London, our project has proven to be very successful and has now attracted a large number of pro bono partners. We now need funding to appoint a volunteer coordinator who can provide dedicated direct support to our volunteer 'advocates'. We need to take advantage of large numbers of volunteers that we now have access to in order to provide access to justice for as many people in the East End as possible.

We established our Advocacy Project some three years ago. As a result of the Government's welfare reforms, it was clear to us that the government was embarked upon systemic discrimination of people with disabilities. We were inundated with clients seeking help with appeals against the stoppage of Employment & Support Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments. In order to address systemic discrimination, we have been supporting appointed 'advocates' to undertake disability appeal casework and to provide advocacy at appeals, which are heard at the First-tier tribunal. People with health problems and disabilities are often left with no money when their benefits are stopped. Voluntary sector organisations do not have the resources in place to support the large number of disability related cases that come through- we aim to increase the capacity of voluntary sector organisations for advocacy and representation and help to strengthen their volunteer systems.

Key outcomes are to address disability discrimination by providing individual support and representation and improve the capacity of other voluntary sector organisations to increase their capacity for advocacy and representation.

To date, we have provided some 140 advocates with training and support to take this work forward. Initially, our volunteers were law students from Queen Mary's University, and lawyers from the USA law firm Skadden LLP. In 2016, the project provided advocates in 162 hearings and achieved a success-rate on appeal of 80%.

In recent months, the following large law firms have joined our project - Slaughter and May, Shearman & Sterling, Reed Smith, Ropes & Gray, White & Case, and Baker & McKenzie.

We want to appoint a Volunteer Coordinator/Caseworker to provide dedicated support to this project, as we plan to double the number of our volunteer 'advocates' to 280 and to have achieved this by April 2017. By December 2017, we also plan to have at least doubled the number of tribunal cases we have assisted, to 324 full appeal hearings.

We also plan to open up our training to community organisations who wish to work in partnership with us. Once trained, we will offer them on-going support, help to develop/strengthen volunteer systems, including file reviews. We have a bespoke online case-management system. Our CMS was funded and developed by Clifford Chance LLP. We will offer the use of this at no cost to partner organisations. This amounts to £4K (cost of off-the-shelf systems) saving each year for each organization which becomes part of our network. This will mean that we can provide remote support such as file reviews and supervision, provided necessary permissions are in place. A number of organisations are part of our network, including the Bromley by Bow Centre, St Hilda's Community Centre and St Peter's Bangladeshi Association.

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?

Advice Quality Standards (AQS).

Regulated by the Solicitors Regulations Authority.

FCA License for debt advice.

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.

Provide representation and advocacy at tribunal hearings for disability related appeals.

Recruit volunteers and pro-bono lawyers from law schools and private law firms.

Promote and take referrals from other organisations and self-referrals from individuals for disability related appeal cases.

Organise and deliver training sessions to future advocates on disability related benefits, appeal procedures and tribunal representation.

Provide access to advocacy training to other organisations to increase their capacity and help to improve their advocacy and representation skills.

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.

Advice and casework support and representation at tribunal hearings to 250 people per year who are vulnerable with health problems and unable to prepare their appeal cases without support.

250 people (with disabilities and long-term health problems) supported with disability related cases to improve their financial circumstances.

60 volunteers and pro-bono lawyers trained in a year.

4 group training sessions a year on appeals, advocacy and representation skills and legal knowledge on disability related benefits.

10 voluntary sector organisations will have increased capacity via access to specialist level training we provide.

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 aim to strengthen the partnership work with the pro-bono sector and hope to secure donations from private law firms within the partnership.

Who will benefit?

About your beneficiaries

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

250

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

Tower Hamlets (80%)

Hackney (10%)

Newham (8%)

Barking & Dagenham (1%)

Waltham Forest (1%)

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?

91-100%

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 (Volunteer Coordinator/Caseworker)	42,908	42,908	42,908	128,724
Insurances	900	900	900	2,700
Publicity	500	500	500	1,500
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0

TOTAL:	44,308	44,308	44,308	132,924
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What income has already been raised?

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

TOTAL:	0	0	0	0
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What other funders are currently considering the proposal?

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	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 (Volunteer Coordinator/Caseworker)	42,908	42,908	42,908	128,724
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0

TOTAL:	42,908	42,908	42,908	128,724
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Finance details

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

Financial year ended:	Month: March	Year: 2016
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Income received from:	£
Voluntary income	388,912
Activities for generating funds	0
Investment income	0
Income from charitable activities	0
Other sources	0
Total Income:	0

Expenditure:	£
Charitable activities	354,424
Governance costs	3,921
Cost of generating funds	0
Other	0
Total Expenditure:	0
Net (deficit)/surplus:	30,567
Other Recognised Gains/(Losses):	0
Net Movement in Funds:	0

Asset position at year end	£
Fixed assets	
Investments	0
Net current assets	37,015
Long-term liabilities	
*Total Assets (A):	37,015

Reserves at year end	£
Restricted funds	0
Endowment Funds	0
Unrestricted funds	37,015
*Total Reserves (B):	37,015

*** 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?
41-50%

Organisational changes

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

None

Previous funding received

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

	Year 3 £	Year 2 £	Most recent £
City of London (except City Bridge Trust)	0	0	0
London Local Authorities	51,000	103,955	164,499
London Councils	0	0	0
Health Authorities	0	0	0
Central Government departments	0	0	0
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	Year 3 £	Year 2 £	Most recent £
Trust for London	23,000	29,000	46,750
Big Lottery (Transition Fund)- Year 1. East End Community Foundation - Year 2&3.	30,000	13,600	12,000
Lloyds TSB Community Foundation - Year 1&3. London Legal Services - Year 2.	14,500	11,896	14,500
Evening Standard Dispossessed Fund - Year 1. Bow Haven - Year 2. London Legal Support Trust - Year 3.	7,000	1,875	12,000
Hackney Parochial & South Hackney Parochial	5,000	5,000	7,000

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: **Shah Begum**

Role within **Solicitor**
Organisation: