

Contingency Funding Covid Community Fund – 2021



Expressions Community Arts

Total award - £4,920

Funding Category:
Covid-19 Organisational
Support - major

Amount requested:
£4,920

Recommendation:
£4,920

Recommendation

Expressions Community Arts is based on the Isle of Dogs and supports people who are experiencing or have been affected by reduced mental ill-health, by the provision of opportunities to take part in creative arts.

Covid-19 impact

The have been active in providing covid response activities to continue to support participants. During Covid lockdowns they reached out to over 30 households and approximate 50 individuals in Tower Hamlets with their impact research and needs assessment. This demonstrated that over half of their members were finding it difficult to maintain a healthy sense of wellbeing, with most of these not being able to access appropriate support. As a result, this has exhausted their finances and currently have no funding to restart service delivery.

This Funding application is to resume activity for beneficiaries to respond to the COVID situation more generally in terms of reducing isolation and promoting recovery after lockdowns and to improve organisational development.

Funding Award Details

The organisation is applying for the covid community fund under organisational support to strengthen Expressions Community Arts to enable core activities to start. They also aim to work with groups of 20 participants, enabling access to arts events and galleries.

The organisation works closely with THCVS on capacity building, governance and funding applications to strengthen the capacity of the organisation, other works includes.

- sustainability planning
- Regular one to one planning meetings to assess business plans.
- Review organisations policies.
- Support identifying funding streams and grants to apply for in addition to bid writing support.

Breakdown of Costs

Beneficiaries: travel, subsistence at arts groups, entrance fees to arts events, galleries etc. 12x events @ 20 per person x 10 people - £2,400

Operations Manager sessional hours £15 per hour x 160 hours - £2,400

Volunteer costs x 1 volunteer at 12 events x £10 per volunteer - £120

Total - £4920



The Families Support Group

Total award - £5,000

Funding Category:
Covid-19 Organisational
Support - major

Amount requested:
£5,000

Recommendation:
£5,000

Recommendation

TFSG applied for the Covid-19 Organisational Support Fund to secure the continuation and sustainability of their African Families Guidance Project which ran for 4 months providing information, advice and guidance services and family support to African Francophone and Lingala speaking families who face barriers to accessing mainstream support due to lack of English, poor education and the prevalence poverty in the community.

The project started in June 2021 and has just completed delivery 30th September 2021, funded (to the running costs value of £4,997) by Tower Hamlets Council Small Grants Fund: Access and Participation – managed by East End Community Foundation.

Covid Impact

The organisation clearly set out the impact of covid on their beneficiaries and the organisation highlighting the disproportionate impact on the Black and African communities and particularly this cohort of African French Speaking families that the group has been supporting.

One of the biggest impact that the organisation highlights is the big digital divide that the pandemic has exposed had a great impact on the Families Support Group and the African French and Lingala speaking families. Due to the lockdown and the lack of face to face support being given the community were all needing to rely on digital solutions to giving support. For example, GP consultations online, school lessons being delivered online. This involved a lot of support to this cohort as the language barriers prevented them accessing adequate basic services. In addition to this the organisation clearly sets out the impact of the pandemic has shown that the African French and Lingala speaking families were amongst the most vulnerable families who do not have the digital skills needed to use online services, or they don't have a device to go online, or that families don't have the data allowances to enable them to go online

Funding Award Details

The organisation is recommended funding of £5,000 to help the organisation deliver it's African Guidance Project for a further 40 weeks to its 230 beneficiaries. The evaluation of their Community Integration Project laid the ground for the organisation to secure their LBTH small grants award under the Access and Participation theme to deliver the African Families Guidance Project which was due to start earlier this year. However, due to a serious long-term case of covid in a household member of the organisation, covid has shaken the resilience of our group causing a slippage in the start of this programme, due to the level of care needed by staff of family members. The project started later in June 2021 and is due to end in September 2021 for which we are seeking continuation

by applying to the Covid-19 Organisational Support Fund.

Their Small Grants funded project led to the organisation increasing membership to 230 families, who are Francophone and Lingala speaking African families living in Tower Hamlets. When they joined the project, they signed up with a contact phone number/mobile number, email address (for those who have one)

The organisation is being supported by THCVS on various capacity building initiatives mainly around digital resources and training for volunteer and board members to fill our capacity gaps. The organisation state that this support is important to them 'This will enable the organization to respond more resiliently as they move in to their third year of supporting the local community.