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Strategic Plan

January 2018- December 2022

**Introduction**

Established in 1891, the Trust for London is an endowed Foundation with responsibility for three funds: the Central Fund; the City Church Fund; and the Common Investment Fund, which is a pooled fund that holds the investment assets which represent the endowments of the Central and City Church funds. However, the Trust has no say in how the City Church Fund uses its distributable sum.

**This Strategic Plan for the five years from January 2018 to December 2022 relates to the Trust for London’s aims and objectives in relation to the Central Fund.**

The Trust’s Board comprises 18 people from diverse backgrounds and knowledge. It employs 18 full time equivalent staff.

**Our Mission**

We are a charitable organisation that exists to reduce poverty and inequality in London. We do this by funding the voluntary and community sector and others, as well as by using our own expertise and knowledge to support work that tackles poverty and its root causes.

**Overall Aims and Objectives**

**Overall Aim**

To reduce the levels of poverty and inequality in London.

**Objectives**

1. To use the Trust’s resources effectively and efficiently to tackle poverty and inequality and their root causes.

2. To manage the endowment effectively in order to maximise the amount available for distribution whilst maintaining the real value of the Trust’s permanent endowment.

**Our Values and Guiding Principles**

We recognise the freedom and **responsibilit**y that arises from our endowment and our **independence** from Government or vested interests.  We seek to use this freedom to be **creative**, **forward-looking** and to **take risks** in responding to **new or unpopular issues**. We accept our responsibility to act with **integrity** and **transparency**.

We are committed to working in an **approachable** and **accessible** way, **listening** to and **learning** from those that we fund.  We believe that commissioning research can improve understanding of the causes and effects of poverty and inequality in London. We look to **partnerships**, particularly with other funders, to help us to increase the impact of our work. In all we do, we expect our Trustees and staff to behave **responsibly**, **ethically, collaboratively** and with **open minds**. As far as practicable, we will strive to adhere to these values in all areas of our work

**Our Strategic Aims**

1. **To tackle poverty and inequality and their root causes.**

We will do this by:

1. Funding civil society organisations to undertake charitable work within our priority areas and to encourage new ideas, innovation and to take risks.
2. Developing and undertaking proactive work and special initiatives within the priority areas to identify gaps.
3. Helping the organisations we fund to carry out their work by providing additional support through our funding plus programme.
4. Encouraging a culture of learning by supporting evaluation and sharing this knowledge more widely to promote social change.
5. Having a balance between funding work that benefits a broad range of people living in poverty with work targeting those experiencing extreme and entrenched poverty.
6. Strengthening the voice and involvement of those living in poverty and facing inequality in addressing these issues.
7. Promoting partnerships and collaboration between the groups we fund.
8. Using our knowledge, research, expertise, resources and learning to increase understanding about poverty and inequality.
9. Influencing policy makers and others with potential solutions.
10. **To maximise the amount available for distribution and to maintain the value of the Trust’s permanent endowment in real terms. To do this with as much harmony with our mission and values as practically possible.**

We intend to achieve this by:

1. Setting an asset allocation strategy that over the long term maximises the total return generated and pays due regard to investment risk.
2. Developing Investment and Ethical Investment policies, accepting that the Trust intends to ‘do good’ and engage, rather than screen negatively.
3. Promoting measures identified from time to time by the Trust’s Board as having an impact on poverty and inequality, eg the London Living Wage; excessive remuneration; and air quality, throughout the organisation, to our advisers and investment managers, funded groups and wherever we have influence.
4. Committing at least 5% of our total endowment to investments which make a social as well as financial return.
5. Exploring ways in which we can use our endowment to fulfill the Trust’s mission without compromising long-term financial returns eg using our land for housing without losing the freehold.
6. **To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our organisation in promoting our mission and values.**

We intend to achieve this by:

* 1. Maximising the opportunities to develop effective and efficient ways of working when the Trust moves from our offices in Middle Street to an alternative location.
  2. Considering closer working collaborations with other organisations in the same field of work.
  3. Improving being a good employer, including considering apprenticeships/placements/internships for Grants work; to link with Cass Business School for shadowing experience for students.
  4. Having robust governance systems.
  5. Seeking recommendations from an externally commissioned Grantee Perception Study which will assess our systems and procedures and benchmark these against similar Foundations.
  6. Reviewing our “carbon footprint” and making improvements where practicable.
  7. Exploring and aspiring to be a good landlord.
  8. Working towards an increased number of people with lived experience of poverty and inequality becoming trustees.

**Assessing how we are doing**

We will Implement our Evaluation Plan in order to assess and report on our own impact and to share our learning.

We will provide an annual report on progress against the Strategic Plan to the Trust’s Board.

*Updated 13 March 2017*

*Presented to 30 March Board meeting and confirmed by email 19 April 2017*