

## Evaluation of Strengthening Voices Realising Rights

### INVITATION TO TENDER

**Call for submissions:** Deadline: Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2019

#### 1. Purpose

This document is an invitation to tender for the evaluation of the Trust for London's *Strengthening Voices Realising Rights (SVRR)* Initiative. It provides brief information about the initiative, details the work we seek to commission, the skills and experience expected from the evaluator(s), and the procedure to tender for this work.

#### 2. About Trust for London

Trust for London (TFL) is an independent endowed foundation dating back to 1891. We aim to help create a fairer London by funding work that tackles poverty and inequality and their root causes. We award c£8.5 million in grants annually.

Our current 2018-2022 strategy commits nearly £40 million in the next 5 years to addressing London's social problems, in particular to fund work that provides insights into the causes of these problems, how they can be overcome, and work to influence policy and practice. A core plank of our strategy is strengthening the voices of people with lived experience of poverty and inequality.

#### 3. About this Initiative

SVRR was set up to spur a renewed emphasis on the realisation of disabled people's rights through resourcing Deaf and Disabled people's organisations (DDPOs) in their work protecting, promoting and advancing equal rights and inclusion for Deaf and Disabled Londoners. It consists of:

- **Individual grants** to provide DDPOs with extra capacity to build and maintain provision of independent, advice, casework representation services to support Deaf Disabled people in understanding, upholding and exercising their rights and entitlements and obtaining services and opportunities<sup>1</sup>. The funding guidelines are attached in *appendix one*.

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<sup>1</sup> The original plan was to support two complementary funding themes: (1) Advice services, and (2) advocacy, campaigning and policy work as part of a funding collaborative. However, due to insufficient interest amongst other funders, TFL decided to start by funding advice work first and to continue to explore ways to expand funds to run the two giving themes as originally envisaged.

- **A capacity building programme** which TFL is commissioning Inclusion London (London's second tier support organisation of DDPOs) to deliver.
- **A funders' network** to provide learning opportunities for funders, promote disability inclusive grant-making practice; foster collaborations; and generally encourage and facilitate the flow of funding to the DDPO sector.
- **Co-production in decision-making:** Within the spirit of "nothing about us, without us" the initiative has recruited advisors who identify as Disabled and have experience as disability rights activists to a Grants Advisory Panel (GAP) to advise on the programmatic approach and grants allocation.

Further to an application process, and with decisions informed by the GAP, TFL recently awarded £1,314,610 over three years for this initiative. Of this, £1,077,110 will be given to seven DDPOs towards provision of social welfare advice for Deaf and Disabled people. It is expected that all seven DDPOs will start the funded work by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. The list of funded groups is attached (*appendix 2*)

This initiative is principally funded by TFL. City Bridge Trust is currently contributing £300,000. It is hoped that the two funders will provide further funds in a second phase to support advocacy work, and that additional funders will join a collaborative in due course to increase the funds to distribute and the scope and lifespan of this initiative.

#### **4. The evaluation – aims and objectives**

TFL seeks to commission a formative evaluation to enable all its key stakeholders to gain an understanding of how the different strands of this initiative and the initiative as a whole is working in order to provide insights to strengthen and improve delivery on ongoing basis.

The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- (a) Assess whether the initiative's design is appropriate and relevant to bring about the outcomes set out in the initiative's Theory of Change (*appendix 3*).
  - (b) Determine the extent to which-
    - Work delivered by the funded DDPOs contribute to achieving the intended outcomes for Deaf and Disabled Londoners;
    - Work to build capacity of DDPOs contribute to achieving the intended outcomes for DDPOs;
    - The GAP, and in particular lived experience of disability supports better decision-making, and how this aspect of the initiative could work better;
  - (c) For each of the initiative's constituents (grants, capacity building, GAP and work within funding community), identify and document good practice and innovations, as well as challenges and areas for improvement.
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- (d) Draw lessons that the Trust and other funders can learn from this work; including identifying strategies for up-scaling best practice and/or replication within the UK funding community.

## **5. Key Questions**

In parallel, TFL would like the evaluation to investigate and provide insights to answer the following learning questions:

- Are there distinctive benefits of the DDPO model of delivering advice services (as opposed to generalist, universal services)? If so what are these?
- Which features of the capacity building support contribute or inhibit success for individual grantees and the whole initiative? What other factors are relevant?
- How best can the Trust ensure meaningful participation of people with lived experience of the issues in decision-making?
- What strategies and approaches are effective in promoting disability inclusive giving practice amongst the UK funding community?

## **6. Deliverables and outputs**

TFL would like the evaluators to:

- a) Support and train staff employed by DDPOs to establish a monitoring & evaluation framework to reflect their 'theory of change' and their planned activities for their project. This includes practical support on establishing data collection methods to assist this evaluation, and ongoing technical support where needed<sup>2</sup>.
- b) Jointly with Inclusion London, to co-ordinate a minimum of two networking/learning events each year. We are keen that the DDPOs learn and reflect on their work and share this amongst DDPOs and others.
- c) Provide an early scoping report identifying baseline findings and providing a more detailed programme for work.
- d) Provide annual interim evaluation reports (years one and two) to document the process and interim outcomes of the work.
- e) Produce a final evaluation report and an executive summary towards the end of the funding to assess the overall achievements against original aims and objectives of the initiative.

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<sup>2</sup> Most grantees already have data collection systems in place. The exercise may entail working out a common framework based on what is already in place.

## **7. Funding available for this work**

A total budget of £85,000 inclusive of VAT, expenses and travel is available.

## **8. How we will support you**

Your contract will be directly with TFL and overseen by Sioned Churchill, Director of Grants. Day to day contract will be with Tania Bronstein, lead Grants Manager for this initiative (Tania will return from extended leave in April).

## **9. What do we expect from evaluators?**

- An understanding of disability as a social construct and commitment to approach it as a human rights issue;
- Experience of using approaches and methodologies capable of generating practical and applicable learning;
- A background in working with or within civil society organisations in the fields of human rights or disability rights, and/or grant making;
- Track record of working successfully in projects involving facilitation and interactions with partners from diverse walks of life;
- Practical experience of formative evaluation methods.
- Understanding of communication needs of different groups and ability to convey information and present findings in accessible ways and formats.

In addition, priority will be given to:

- Consultants that identify as Disabled/organisations led by Disabled people
- Living wage registered employers.

## **10. How to submit your proposal**

Please send us a proposal with the following information:

- An outline of the approach to be taken to address the brief, including a description of the evaluation methods to be used;
- A response to this brief stating why are you well placed to deliver the work;
- Background information on the evaluator(s) who would be involved in this work, including their experience (please attach relevant CVs);
- Two examples of recent projects (or a hyperlink) of similar work that you have delivered, what you learned from these and how they are relevant;
- Your understanding of the opportunities and risks associated with this project and how you would maximise or mitigate them;
- Any ethical issues arising;
- Budget outline;
- Contact details of two referees.

The maximum length of proposal including CVs should not exceed ten A4 pages.  
We are open to proposals from organisations or individual consultants.

Please submit your proposal by email to [sioned@trustforlondon.org.uk](mailto:sioned@trustforlondon.org.uk)

**11. Date for submission of responses:** Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2019 – 5:00 pm

**12. Interviews:** will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019 (please indicate whether you are available on this date)

## **Strengthening Voices, Realising Rights**

### **FUNDING GUIDELINES**

#### **About this initiative**

*Strengthening Voices, Realising Rights* is an independent funders' initiative set up to support Deaf and Disabled people's organisations (DDPOs) working to protect and promote equal rights and community inclusion for Deaf and Disabled Londoners. It is managed by Trust for London, and currently funded by Trust for London and City Bridge Trust.

#### **Why we are setting up this initiative, and why now?**

Deaf and Disabled people and their organisations have secured critical advances towards the goal of equality and inclusion for disabled people over the past 40 years. Now, after years of disproportionate cuts to Disabled people's support, growing numbers of Deaf and Disabled Londoners face rising levels of poverty, discrimination and marginalisation. Cuts in support have also reduced the capacity of DDPOs in London to respond to growing demand for services and further their advocacy work.

If we are to get back on track to advancing equality and inclusion for Deaf and Disabled people, a renewed emphasis on resourcing DDPOs to champion the protection, promotion and fulfilment of disabled people's rights is needed. This initiative is a first step in this direction.

#### **Our aims and objectives**

The initiative aims to support DDPOs working to protect, promote and advance equal rights and community inclusion for Disabled Londoners by:

- Providing funds to increase the availability of accessible, quality user-led services and activities to tackle poverty, challenge discrimination, and enable community inclusion across London;

- Investing in the sector's capacity by supporting DDPOs to become more connected, impactful, resilient and sustainable;
- Sharing learning within the UK funding community to contribute to disability inclusive funding practices and joined up, strategic approaches to supporting the issues championed by DDPOs.

The initial funding allocation supports services offering free, independent social welfare advice<sup>3</sup> in London. The funding partners plan to launch a second focus to fund advocacy, voice and campaigning at a later stage.

## Call for Proposals

### What work will be funded?

**Advice, casework and advocacy:** The initiative will provide funding to DDPOs in need of extra capacity to deliver free, independent information, advice, casework, and advocacy services in social welfare to support Deaf and Disabled people to:

- Understand, uphold and exercise their rights,
- Obtain social protection benefits, and access services and opportunities to which they are entitled; and
- Challenge discrimination in accessing rights and entitlements.

DDPOs that are not yet accredited with a relevant quality mark can apply as support will be provided to pursue the Advice Quality Standard (AQS) accreditation, if required. The key criteria to select applications will be:

- The nature of the organisation (see next page under the title "Eligibility");
- Evidence that the DDPO needs additional funding to respond to growth in demand for advice;

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<sup>3</sup> Social Welfare Law is the term used in the UK to describe those areas of the civil law in which people on low incomes are typically prone to experience difficulties. It includes debt, discrimination, welfare rights, employment, mental health, community care, education, employment, immigration and housing (Source: University of Law).

- Evidence of:
  - User centred, competent, reliable services striving for quality;
  - Seamless support including through sign-posting and referring users to timely advice by the appropriate source;
  - Commitment to making services accessible and to taking advice to people missing out the most (e.g. by way of outreach, home visits, or through new technologies).
  - Commitment to give time to this programme's learning. activities

## What do we want to achieve?

We expect applications to contribute towards the following outcomes:

- More advice services accessible to Disabled Londoners
- More Disabled Londoners receive adequate social protection benefits and/or access entitlements or benefits
- More Disabled people are supported to redress discrimination and abuses of their rights.
- Improved evidence base for influencing policy using data gathered through advice services

## Eligibility

We will **only** fund DDPOs based and running activities in London that:

- Are controlled by Deaf and/or Disabled people, with Deaf/Disabled people making up at least 75% of the people on their managing body and at least 50% of their paid staff;
- Can evidence how the social model of disability and their approach to disability as a human rights issue is reflected in the work they do;
- Are pan-impairment and aim to provide accessible services across impairment groups;
- Have a track record of providing advice and/or advocacy services to Disabled people;
- Promote & facilitate Deaf and Disabled people's voice and power to advance their rights and pursue social change;



- Are diverse and inclusive and actively respond to the challenges facing people who experience multiple inequalities;
- Facilitate the involvement of service users and constituents in decision-making processes and in assuming leadership positions;
- Are linked to wider DDPO networks and are involved in campaigning and influencing on disability equality issues.

### **Additional non-monetary support to funded organisations**

In addition to funding towards their projects, DDPOs receiving grants through this initiative will benefit from a “step up” package of support consisting of one-to-one and shared learning and networking opportunities to support them to grow in capacity, impact and influence.

The additional benefits include:

- Support in relation to advice-giving competences and also processes to gain AQS accreditation;
- Bespoke resources and training for advice and advocacy workers of DDPOs including in collating casework data to inform strategic policy work at local, sub-regional and London levels;
- Training to support peer advocacy developments, if needed;
- Links and referral pathways to specialist legal services including representation at assessments and tribunals;
- Establishing and supporting communities of shared learning;
- A formative evaluation exercise to generate on-going insights into how the work is progressing and enable all stakeholders to gain timely information to reflect upon and improve their practice

### **What can the funds be used for?**

We will fund salary costs of staff on the project; direct costs of the service, including increasing the accessibility of advice services (for example travel, venue hire, interpreters, staff training); and a reasonable proportion of the DDPO's overheads (by this we mean the costs of central or core activities to support the project, such as management and accountancy).

## Level of funding

Grants will be for a maximum of £60,000 per year for each of three years (i.e. up to £180,000 over three years). The funds currently available to the collaborative will support between five and seven DDPOs. Ensuring a fair coverage across London's sub-regions will be a priority for donors.

This programme will only accept one application per DDPO. However, DDPOs already receiving funds from the main grants programmes of either Trust for London and City Bridge Trust are eligible to apply.

## Decision-making

A Grants Advisory Panel (GAP) will help shape the initiative's programmatic approach, contribute to decision-making, and to the learning component. The GAP includes individuals who identify as Deaf and Disabled who are experienced activists for disability rights, along with staff from the partner funders. The Panel will make funding recommendations to the Trustees of Trust for London, who will make the final decisions.

## How to apply

If your organisation meets the eligibility criteria, please:

- Complete the **application form** available here;

<https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/issues/people/disabled-people/strengthening-voices-realising-rights/>

- Send your completed application form together with a **copy of your most recent annual accounts** and, a copy of the **job description** if you are applying for funds towards salary costs

**To:**

applications@trustforlondon.org.uk

Trust for London

6 Middle Street

London EC1A 7PH

Please ensure that your application and ancillary documents reach us before the closing date - **17<sup>th</sup> October at 5:00 pm.**

## **Timetable**

3 September 2018:	Fund launched
17 October 2018:	Deadline for completed applications
22 <sup>nd</sup> October to 5 <sup>th</sup> November	November shortlisted applicants visited and applications assessed.
3 December 2018:	Grants announced at International Disabled People's day

**Please note that all funded work must start by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019**

## Appendix 2

# Strengthening Voices Realising Rights

## List of funded organisations

<b>Name of Organisation</b>	<b>Award</b>
Action Disability Kensington and Chelsea	£111,750 over three years for a part-time Disability Specialist Legal Advice Worker specialising in Welfare Benefits and general Advice with Casework in discrimination,
Disability Advice Service Lambeth (DASL)	£169,000 over three years towards salary/running costs of a Senior Advice Worker with hours recruitment of 4 additional volunteer benefit advisers, and management costs to ensure service quality
Enfield Disability Action	£180,000 over three years for an accessible advice and advocacy service for Deaf and Disabled people in Enfield. The service will deliver advice and advocacy on welfare rights, housing, health, social care and human rights issues.
Inclusion Barnet (IB)	£174,660 over three years to place for full-time Welfare Advisor within Ito join a new information navigation service, to provide a full-time accessible welfare and money advice and casework
Merton Centre For Independent Living	£180,000 over three years towards two trainee posts to increase capacity in Welfare Benefits and Community Care casework
Richmond Users Independent Living (Ruils),	£142,000 over three years for a person-centred information, advice and advocacy service for disabled people in Richmond. This service will support individuals over welfare and social care systems and housing.
Stay Safe East (SSE)	£119,700 over three years to support Deaf and Disabled survivors of abuse to access welfare benefits and other entitlements, produce guidance on income needs of disabled survivors, and work for change

**Vision: Equality for Deaf and Disabled people**

**Aim: to strengthen the capacity of Deaf and Disabled people to realise their rights**

**Current Conditions**

- Scarce accessible support for Deaf & Disabled people now facing rising levels of poverty, exclusion and discrimination
- Fewer DDPOs in London; those remaining have reduced capacity, skills and resources to ensure that the rights of Deaf & Disabled Londoners are protected, promoted and fulfilled
- Progress towards equality for Deaf and Disabled people at risk of regressing as result of welfare reform and years of austerity cutbacks

**Strategies**

- Increase availability of accessible, quality peer-led services to tackle poverty, challenge discrimination and enable community inclusion.
- Increase DDPOs' skills in:
  - (a) Providing services, developing evidence base and in policy, campaigning and influencing;
  - (b) Becoming more impactful, connected, resilient and sustainable
- Promote disability inclusive funding practices and strategic approaches to supporting issues championed by DDPOs in the funding community
- Walk the talk - live up to the initiative's aims with Deaf & Disabled people in the lead

**Action**

- Fund and leverage funds to bolster DDPO's capacity to offer quality social welfare advice and undertake policy, advocacy and campaigns to ensure that Deaf & Disabled people's rights are protected, promoted and fulfilled
- Invest in building capacity, skills, governance abilities and networks of DDPOs
- Set up a Funders Learning Network to share learning within the UK funding community
- Engage expertise from experience to inform approach and resource allocation.
- Invest in learning, skills sharing and development

**Outcomes**

**Deaf & Disabled Londoners (DDL)**

- More DDL access quality assured advice services
- More DDL have quicker access to early interventions and to later stages representation
- More DDL assert their rights to sufficient sustainable income and to services to support independence and community inclusion

**Deaf & Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs)**

- Staff in DDPOs gain skills and learning to improve outcomes for DDL in need of social welfare advice
- DDPOs become more competent in generating evidence base to push for change
- DDPOs increase skills in campaigning, and influencing, and in articulating and amplifying the needs and demands of Deaf and Disabled people
- More DDPOs can evidence added value of their work and secure resources to sustain their work

**Public policy arena**

- Increased reach, visibility, and alignment of DDPOs campaigning efforts
- Local and national politicians and policy makers become aware and understanding of the case for policy change based on evidence from DDPOs
- Progress made in the effective enforcement of domestic and international laws /treaties that protect Deaf and Disabled people from discrimination and promote their equality