

## Evaluation of Strengthening Voices Realising Rights

### INVITATION TO TENDER

Call for submissions

**Deadline:** 18 November 2020

#### 1. Purpose

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

#### 2. About Trust for London

Trust for London 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 £9 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 Strengthening Voices Realising Rights (SVRR)

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<sup>1</sup> (DDPOs) in their work protecting, promoting and advancing equal rights and inclusion for Deaf and Disabled Londoners. It consists of:

- **Individual grants** distributed in 2 phases:
  - (a) Phase 1 awarded £1,077,110 to seven DDPOs to build and maintain provision of independent, advice, and casework representation services to support Deaf and Disabled people in understanding, upholding and exercising their rights and entitlements. Phase 1 started on 1 April 2019 and will finish on 31 March 2022. The guidelines for Phase 1 are provided in Appendix 1, and the list of funded

---

<sup>1</sup> Inclusion London's definition of a DDPO: an organisation in which at least 75 % of their Board of Management and a least 50% of their staff at all levels are Deaf and/or Disabled people, and they provide services for, or work on behalf of, Deaf and/or Disabled people.

groups is provided in Appendix 2. The Phase 1 funded DDPOs have been delivering their work for 18 months now, and have been working remotely since the outbreak of Covid-19. All these DDPOs will be reporting on their work in the first 6 months of the project's second year in October 2020.

(b) Phase 2 was formulated to fund DDPOs to carry out policy advocacy, campaigning and other work to influence and hold policy and decision-makers to account for protecting, promoting and fulfilling Deaf and Disabled people's rights. Phase 2 funds have not yet been fully spent. This phase attracted 18 applications by the closing date in June 2020. Of these, 11 proposals were long-listed and just 3 of them were proved. Alternative ways to distribute the unspent balance by June 2021 are currently being discussed. Phase 2 will also run for 3 years<sup>2</sup>. Guidelines for Phase 2 are provided in Appendix 3.

- **A capacity building programme:** Trust for London is commissioning Inclusion London (London's second tier support organisation of DDPOs) to deliver this programme to Phase 1 funded groups. This element of the initiative has been adapted to the covid-19 realities and is delivering well. There is now a community of learning among the cohort of funded DDPOs.
- **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. The recruitment pack for GAP, which includes its terms of reference is appended (Appendix 4).

The initiative originally intended to support 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. Several ad hoc interventions have been provided, although this aspect has not been yet developed to the extent that was desired at the outset.

This initiative has been funded by Trust for London and City Bridge Trust. To date Phase 1 has received a total £1,314,610, of which CBT contributed £300,000. Phase 2 was launched with £900,000. Trust for London is providing £500,000 and City Bridge Trust is providing £400,000.

#### **4. Background information and current situation**

This is the second tender brief for this evaluation. In April 2019, following an open tender process, a team of researchers were appointed to carry out the evaluation of Phase 1. The methodological approach and expertise of the learning partners and the requirements of the evaluation brief were not a good fit and the relationship ended in August 2020. This brief incorporates learning from the previous experience. One aspect was that the approach adopted required an unsustainable level of staff input from the Trust and risked undermining the independence of the evaluation.

---

<sup>2</sup> The implication for this evaluation is that it will have to last at least four years

## 5. Data available to date

Narrative reports on the work of each of the 7 funded DDPOs and from Inclusion London in the first 12 months are available. Although information gathering has not been systematic, these reports would still be useful to the learning partner.

From January to May 2020, an associate consultant from Charities Evaluation Services offered bespoke support to the DDPOS funded under Phase 1 to set up monitoring & evaluation frameworks (M&E) aligning to SVRR's theory of change. Monitoring returns are being collated every 6 months beginning in the period April to October 2020.

Agendas and minutes of meetings of the GAP are also available.

## 6. The evaluation – aims and objectives

Trust for London 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, to provide insights to strengthen and improve delivery on ongoing basis. Ultimately, we wish to gain information to help the Trust and others in the funding community to improve our response to the user-led disability sector. We expect the evaluation to address both process and impact.

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 5*).
- (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) Identify and document good practice and innovations, as well as challenges and areas for improvement for each of the initiative's constituents (grants, capacity building, GAP and work within funding community).
- (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.

The Trust expects that the evaluation process will be predominately developmental, iterative and formative, with learning constantly feeding back into the programme.

## 7. Key questions

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

Is added value accrued from services which are user led? What are the distinctive benefits of the DDPO model of delivering advice services (as opposed to non-user led generalist, universal services)?

What are the capacity learning needs of the DDPO sector? Which features of the capacity building support offered by SVRR 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?

## **8. Deliverables and outputs**

### **Phase 1 - to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022**

- Develop evaluation plans for each of the 3 key units of analysis (DDPOs, capacity building and GAP) 3 months after appointment.
- Provision of ongoing critical friend' support to the initiative including the funded projects (DDPOs will be sending six-monthly monitoring returns by 31.10.20, 31.03.21, 31.10.21 and 31.03.22).
- Provide two interim evaluation reports around May 2021 and November 2021 to document the process and analyse interim outcomes of the work to identify key themes and challenges and steps that may be required to address areas of concern.
- Deliver at least two stakeholder's learning days to share the interim findings above, facilitate sharing of knowledge and experiences, and encourage reflective practice.
- Deliver a final evaluation report for Phase 1 by June 2022.

### **Phase 2 - from Spring 2021 to June 2024**

- Support staff employed by DDPOs to refine their project's "theory of change". The Trust via Charities Evaluation Services supports funded groups to establish monitoring and evaluation framework. This includes practical support on establishing data collection methods.
- Receive six-monthly monitoring returns from the funded DDPOs, critically analyse developments and provide ongoing 'critical friend' support to the funded projects and SVRR as a whole.
- Provide at least 3 interim evaluation reports to document the process and analyse interim outcomes of the initiative to identify key themes and challenges and steps that may be required to address areas of concern.
- Deliver at least three stakeholder's learning days to share the interim findings above, facilitate sharing of knowledge and experiences, and encourage reflective practice.
- Produce a final evaluation report for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 and an executive summary towards the end of the funding.

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

A budget of £60,000 inclusive of VAT, expenses and travel is available. The contract sum can be negotiated if warranted.

## **10. How we will support you?**

Your contract will be directly with Trust for London and overseen by Sioned Churchill, Director of Grants. Day to day contact will be with Tania Bronstein, the SVRR Programme Manager. The Trust is committed to providing the learning partner with the necessary support to overcome challenges arising from taking on an evaluation which did not work well previously. It is open to the idea of setting an advisory group or similar to support the evaluation.

## **11. What do we expect from the Learning Partner?**

- Practical understanding of the social model of disability and 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.
- Practical experience of formative evaluation methods.
- Practical understanding of communication needs of different groups and ability to convey information and present findings in accessible ways and formats.
- Experience of facilitating and convening organisations to work together and share learning, both virtually and in-person.
- Experience of providing 'critical friend' support in the context of evaluation.
- Strong understanding of and commitment to research ethics and safeguarding.
- Knowledge and experience of data protection law and principles, data security and privacy issues and commitment to research ethics and safeguarding.
- Preparedness to be responsive and flexible to meet the needs of the funded DDPOs.

In addition, priority will be given to:

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

## **12. 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) to 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 [tania@trustforlondon.org.uk](mailto:tania@trustforlondon.org.uk)

**13. Date for submission of responses:** 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**14. Interviews:** Week beginning 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020