

# Working together to create a borough of opportunity

## Predictive Equality Impact Assessment (PEIA) (V.6)

### FOR ALL COUNCIL DECISIONS ONLY



#### Title of report or proposal:

Fast Track Small Grants Scheme, April 2010

#### Summary

This report considers the impact of recommended allocations of the Fast Track Small Grants scheme April 2010, which is aimed at local 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations.

#### **Describe in full the aims, objectives and purpose of the proposal, including desired outcomes:**

The Council's 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Investment Fund for 2010-2011 includes a ring-fenced budget for a Fast Track Small Grants (FTSG) Scheme. This budget was set aside in the Cabinet report on the Voluntary & Community Sector Funding Review, agreed on the 16th April 2007 and in the LBHF 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Strategy, agreed by Cabinet in September 2009. Cabinet agreed that the Cabinet Member for Community and Children's services will approve awards and that this is reported periodically as a Cabinet Members Decision.

The budget for FTSG for 2010-11 is £200,000, to be allocated over two rounds during the financial year. Organisations can receive only one FTSG per financial year. FTSGs are intended to:

- give local 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations an opportunity to apply for one off grants for specific projects or new initiatives
- Be straightforward, user-friendly and open to a wide range of organisations

Since the scheme started in 2007, 336 grants have been made to local 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations to deliver short term projects or activities.

#### **Fast Track – March 2010**

Officers from Community Investment in conjunction with the Community and Voluntary Sector Association (CaVSA), provided a briefing in January 2010 to local organisations interested in applying for a FTSG. The availability of FTSG was advertised in Community Investment's publication Funding News (sent out to over 977 representatives from local 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations) and on the Council's website. The application pack was available from 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009, with a closing date of the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

In order to respond to requests from organisations who are ineligible to apply for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Investment Fund, which from 2010 will include a minimum annual funding level of £10,000, and in consideration of increased costs since the introduction of FTSG, an upper limit of £10,000 awardable to a maximum of 5 organisations was included in this round, with the remainder of the fund to be allocated within the existing £5,000 limit.

Application forms were available by post or email; or could be downloaded from the Council's website. All applicants received guidance notes on completing their applications. The criteria for FTSG continue to focus on meeting the Council's key targets. Organisations seeking funding towards the provision of supplementary education are required to be a member of the CaVSA Supplementary Schools Network.

This round is substantially oversubscribed: the budget is £100,000; applicant organisations applied for £545,895 in total. 87 groups applied for the lower level of funding (up to £5,000). 22 organisations applied for more than £5,000, in an attempt to take advantage of the new upper limit of £10,000. Officers categorised the submitted applications as determined by their predominant service area (see summary table in report). 108 applications were completed and returned by the closing date; 1 organisation returned the application after the closing date, therefore could not be considered for assessment.

All applications were assessed by at least two officers (and a third where required), including lead officers from departments across the council. Applications were scored against the funding criteria which were sent out in the guidance notes. The Head of Community Investment was then presented with a detailed analysis of all applications, together with officers' provisional recommendations, in order to agree the recommendations and level of funding to be awarded to each organisation as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.

67 of the 109 applicant organisations are not recommended for funding for a variety of reasons as listed (often combined):

- applications were of poor quality, incomplete, contained incorrect information and/or lacked supporting documents
- organisations did not adequately meet the funding criteria

- applicants did not return monitoring information from previous Fast Track funding (except round 5, which was not due yet as assessments took place)
- applicants requested running costs for rent or rates
- the applying organisations already receive funding from the main 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Investment Fund and due to exceptionally very high demand in this round, these organisations could not be given priority for funding.
- application was returned after the closing date

42 out of the 109 applications were assessed as delivering good value and proposing services or activities that will make a difference to residents. Officers recommend funding to be awarded to these groups (see full list in appendix 2 of the report).

An exceptionally high number of applications was received. To maximise the number of groups supported by the Council, officers recommend that groups are awarded less than requested in order to achieve best value for money, and to spread funding across all service areas.

Many applications in this round were not of a very good standard. Outreach work will continue to publicise the availability of funding and training support across the sector and to widen the range and scope of the ideas and projects submitted.

The next round of FTSG will be advertised in June 2010 with funding available from October 2010. It will continue to build on the lessons learned from the previous rounds, particularly that:

- Consideration should be given to groups who need to plan events over longer periods and therefore need to secure funding well ahead of the event.
- Applicants may be awarded part funding, i.e. a contribution towards costs.
- Organisations will be held responsible for supplying a full and complete application.
- Organisations will be asked to include any supporting documentation evidencing need with their applications
- Organisations who have not returned monitoring information on time from the previous rounds will be ineligible for funding
- The potential for outcome based monitoring will be further explored.

Department:

**CSD**

Officer Responsible: *(to be completed by the report author)*

**Katharina Herrmann, x2482, [Katharina.Herrmann@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:Katharina.Herrmann@lbhf.gov.uk)**

(Signature, Print Name, Contact Number and Email Address)

**Form and report MUST be checked and countersigned** by the Opportunities Officer (Organisational Development)

Opportunities Officer: *(to be completed by the Opportunities Manager)*

Signed off by Carly Fry on **28/04/2010** Email [PEIA@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:PEIA@lbhf.gov.uk) Tel 020 8753 3430

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

**1. Who are the main people that this decision will affect?**

voluntary & community sector service users; H&F residents; Voluntary and Community Sector organisations (Staff, volunteers, management committee members and trustees).

**2. Identify the risks that could prevent the planned outcomes**

Risks include:

- Not being able to offer the full request to some groups could lead to some projects being unviable
- The scheme has been widely oversubscribed therefore many groups will not receive funding
- As no analysis of need among applicant groups was undertaken there is a risk that the funding impact may not be significant – although the funding criteria does state that priority will be given to schemes which address Council priorities, groups which address Council priorities may not serve the

communities most in need

- Success is dependant on the quality of the applications so the programme may not fulfil expectations particularly of some small groups
- Some previously funded groups may have high expectations of funding
- That the budget is insufficient to fund all high scoring schemes
- That some successful applicants may not be able to spend funding particularly where inexperienced groups have put together good applications but are not equipped to see the project through. The application process is 'light touch' – there is a chance that an applicant which has not planned well may be funded and unable to deliver an ambitious project.

### **3. Could the proposal have a positive impact on a) race b) disability c) gender d) sexual orientation e) age f) belief system groups?**

FTSG is likely to have a positive impact on these groups as applications were received from organisations representing or working with these equalities groups. The following is worth noting:

The sector played a significant role in developing FTSG: officers held a consultation meeting with the voluntary sector on the 17th May 2007, where the scheme was positively welcomed and organisations were invited to comment on the draft application form. In addition the Better Government Reading Group appraised the draft papers in order to ensure the documents were user-friendly and jargon free. The scheme considers high scoring small and unfunded groups first.

All organisations are required to provide a monitoring report on the service or activity funded under the Fast Track scheme. This includes whether the anticipated outcomes were achieved, take up by anticipated beneficiaries, and feedback from participants.

#### **a) Race**

This scheme offers many smaller BME & R groups an opportunity to apply for funding, particularly where other funding is offered over a longer term and is less frequently advertised. In this way the small grants scheme is able to flexibly respond to new issues and need.

The majority of organisations recommended for funding are open to all local residents, from all communities. Of the 42 organisations recommended for funding, 7 organisations will deliver a project or activity specifically for target BME communities.

#### **b) disability**

All applicants are expected to demonstrate their commitment to equalities, and many detail how their service will be accessible to disabled people (accessible venues and information etc.). Of the 42 organisations recommended for funding, 7 organisations will deliver a project or activity specifically for disabled residents.

#### **c) gender and d) sexual orientation**

This scheme offers voluntary organisations focused on gender or gender specific groups as well as groups focused on sexual orientation an opportunity to apply for new funding. By default, many of the older people's services will support mainly older women. However, 3 of the 42 recommended groups will deliver a project or activity specifically for women or girls.

#### **e) age**

This scheme offers access to funding for a good number of disability and health support projects which are keen to develop innovative and flexible initiatives and projects in response to demand and legislation. A number of these projects are targeted at specific age groups:

- 8 organisations will deliver services/activities specifically for older people
- 18 organisations will deliver services specifically for children/younger people

#### **f) belief systems**

The scheme offers groups which focus on beliefs an opportunity to apply for funding for cultural, celebratory or awareness raising events/activities. Of the 42 organisations recommended for funding, there are no specific applications to fund services or events that relate to belief systems.

#### **4. Could the proposal have a differential negative impact on a) race b) disability c) gender d) sexual orientation e) age f) belief system groups?**

##### **a) b) c) d) e) f)**

Demand significantly exceeds funding availability and that this may impact differentially on different communities as funding will respond to demand e.g. many good applications for one area may lead to a higher percentage of that kind of activity being funded, although officers are aiming for a good spread. The funding criteria states that funding will not be available for activities/projects that have religious interests/objectives, and this may mean that BME groups may have a smaller chance of success as many applications from BME groups focus on cultural and often religious celebrations. Religious groups are eligible to apply for funding, provided that those organisations do not require service users to follow the religion in question, as this would impede on our upcoming public equality duty, which requires public bodies (however they are providing a service), to provide it in such a way that all service users can access the same service to a similar standard elsewhere [[GEO Guidance Note](#)]. However, there were no specific applications received to fund services or events that relate to belief systems.

Of the 67 applications not recommended for funding:

- 28 would have provided services to children and/or young people
- 17 would have provided services to particular BME communities
- 5 would have provided services specifically to disabled people
- 3 would have provided services specifically to women or girls

As all voluntary groups can apply, a number of large organisations have applied for funding – these organisations tend to be most able when completing applications (they are large because they are successful fundraisers). There was a chance that these groups could attract the bulk of the funding but the focus on small groups and the benefit of funding for residents is intended to address this. However, in order to maximise the number of groups supported by the council, assessing officers are recommending that those organisations already funded under the council's main grants programme, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Investment Fund, are not prioritised in this round of Fast Track Small Grants. This resulted in a number of organisations being not recommended for funding, and a higher number of smaller or currently unfunded groups to be successful.

#### **5. Could the proposal have any differential impact (either positive, negative or neutral) on the health outcomes of the local population? Please provide details.**

Please note risks mentioned above, no significant negative impacts are anticipated. A number of applications are actively seeking to address health issues in the borough.

Of the 42 organisations recommended for funding, 6 organisations' primary or secondary outcomes are around improving the health and wellbeing of local residents. Of the unsuccessful applications, 4 would have delivered services or activities focussed on health and wellbeing.

#### **6. Can any differential negative impact of the decision be justified?**

Mostly caused by limits of funding available – there is no obvious way around that, as large extra sums of funding are unlikely to be available any time soon. However, Fast Track Small Grants scheme is

available twice in each financial year – so unsuccessful applicants have the opportunity to re-apply in 6 months time. All unsuccessful applicants are given detailed feedback as to why their bid was unsuccessful in order that they can improve their application in future rounds.

**7. If you have undertaken any internal/ external research or consultation(s) please list these below:**

Regular meetings with Commissioners and in house stakeholders are held to plan and review each round of Fast Track Grants.

A number of briefing sessions have been held with the sector, to provide information on the sorts of activities or projects that are suitable for Fast Track, and to provide a workshop on writing a good funding application.

CaVSA have been commissioned to undertake a review of Fast Track Small Grants to examine the application and monitoring processes to maximise efficiency and performance in future rounds.

**8. Do you need to undertake any further consultation? If so, what and with whom?**

Continuous consultation on FTSG takes place with CaVSA, other voluntary organisations and funders funders, commissioners and service are heads within LBHF. CaVSA have undertaken a review of Fast Track Small Grants to inform future funding priorities, application process and outcomes feedback.

**9. If any differential negative impact is predicted, what actions are you planning to implement which would help lessen any adverse impact? Please give details.**

- Continue to provide training and advice to improve quality and range of applications received.
- Continue to publicise FTSG as widely as possible.
- Review priorities for Fast Track, including services that are less or more likely to be successful
- Review funding process regularly with voluntary sector stakeholders.
- Consider new groups as priorities, provided their applications are of good quality.
- Strategic support of supplementary schools – including specification of what supplementary education will be prioritised by the council

**PLEASE EMAIL COMPLETED FORM TO [PEIA@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:PEIA@lbhf.gov.uk)**

**Contact: Equalities & Diversity Officer, 020 8753 3430  
London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham**