

GRANT APPLICATION 2014/15 – ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATION

Priority Corporate Outcomes	To promote a healthy, active, independent and informed over-55 population To increase resilience amongst older people and help them to age well	
Organisation	SAAM THEATRE COMPANY	ref 334/C/CTY
Address	5 Gordon Road, N11	

Corporate policy, aims and objectives

The council is committed to helping people to be independent and live active lives, recognizing that some people need more support than others to achieve this. The transformation of adult health and social care set out in the Care Act 2014 and Department of Health publications 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' and 'A Vision for Social Care, Capable Communities and Active Citizens' places growing emphasis on preventative services; delivering targeted information and advice; ensuring people have the right support at the right time; and enabling people to plan for later life.

The Older Adults Strategy, 'Living Longer, Living Better', and the Older People's Commissioning Strategy, 2008-17, 'Independence, Choice and Control', focus on developing preventative services; tackling inequalities; and the wider well-being agenda. Barnet's Health and Well-Being Strategy and Integrated Care Model seek to promote the health and well-being of older and disabled people, helping them to achieve key outcomes, including the best possible quality of life, and to remain part of the community. The provision of culturally specific services to support older people from minority ethnic communities is a key element of each strategy to overcome the problems of social exclusion.

Activities / proposal

SAAM Theatre Company (STC) is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee formed in 2000 which aims to help the Iranian and Farsi (Persian) - speaking population of London to integrate into British society through theatre, performing arts and cultural events, bridging the gap between English and Persian cultures, whilst preserving the cultural heritage of its client groups. Recent or current projects include:

- * 'Healing Through Learning', helping families to explore the issues of immigration and being uprooted and supporting their integration into the community;
- * 'English Through Drama' - weekly workshops to help participants to improve their English by translating Persian plays into the English language and performing them on stage to English and Farsi-speaking audiences;
- * business start-up training with presentation skills through drama to help clients to start their own businesses or find employment.

Although based in Haringey, most of SAAM's activities take place in Barnet. Workshops are held at the Unitarian Church Hall in Golders Green, where a new programme of drama classes started this autumn. Performances, including an annual Persian Theatre Festival, have been held at Finchley Youth Theatre and the Arts Depot. Most clients are Farsi-speaking residents of north London. 36% of 642 service users over the last three years have been from Barnet.

This application concerns a proposal to establish a weekly drama and dance club specifically for older people aged 55+ living in Barnet with a focus on members of the Iranian and Farsi-speaking communities, the third largest ethnic group in the borough, but with membership open

to members of all communities in support of integration. The club, which will initially have capacity for 40 people at a time, will include drama drills and exercises; storytelling to help older people better express themselves; and talks and seminars on topics of relevance to the target group, such as money management, tax inheritance and the effect of welfare reform on statutory entitlements. Its focus on creative activities to improve physical and mental health will distinguish it from other local support groups for black and minority ethnic (BME) communities which concentrate on advice-giving, information and advocacy.

There is a reasonable expectation that the club will serve to promote integration based on the diverse audiences who have attended the public performances of STC's plays and the positive feedback from English speakers about how the productions have provided an insight into Iranian life and culture.

The proposal is supported by Adults & Communities on the basis of how it complements the emphasis on self-help and prevention, and the promotion of well-being, amongst older people, especially those from BME communities, in a way that is innovative and distinctive from other support services. A commitment to identify and target especially isolated older people and alignment with the Barnet Neighbourhood Group led by Age UK Barnet, the voluntary and community sector consortium commissioned by Adults & Communities to deliver activities and services to older people, should be conditions of any award in support of the new club.

Cost and financial need

STC operates on the basis of mainly fixed-term grants which support its various projects. It receives no core funding. Workshops are mainly run by sessional workers, actors and artists, supported by volunteers. Expenditure on four projects delivered in 2012/13 was £64,889, when grants from four sources, including the Big Lottery Awards for All Scheme, constituted 95% of income, supplemented by revenue from fees and charges. Net current assets at 31/3/2013 were £21,263, of which £17,498 were restricted funds, largely made up of grant instalments paid in advance for projects extending into the next financial year, leaving an uncommitted balance of £3,765 (7.5% of expenditure in 2013/14).

The charity's accounts for 2013/14 remain subject to auditing, but draft figures for the year show a deficit of £1,813 on a turnover of £49,999.

A grant of £9,480 is sought to launch and run the new over 55s dance and drama club over the next twelve months on the basis that it will be financially sustainable from year two onwards. The budget comprises direct delivery costs (over 40 weeks), equal to the grant request, made up of venue hire charges (£4,000); the cost of engaging drama and dance teachers (£2,500); marketing/publicity; and a contribution to administrative and management overheads. STC values the cost of in-kind support, including office rent, refreshments and other overheads, at £5,300.

Income from a proposed weekly charge of £3, potentially generating up to £4,800 pa depending on how quickly take-up builds, is excluded from the budget. The grant recommended assumes that at least £3,000 will be collected in this way based on an average weekly attendance of 25, reducing the funding requirement to £6,480.

The club's sustainability is predicated on the introduction in year two of a membership fee and a new charging structure linked to the development of other volunteer-led activities, including one-to-one support and assistance to less independent clients and those with a language barrier and an expanded programme of social events; reconfiguration of the club as a social enterprise; and fundraising initiatives in the Iranian and Farsi-speaking communities. A

proposal to set income from fees in year one against costs in year two has been rejected in the context of this application.

Grant recommendation, type and conditions

£6,480 (from Edward Harvist Charity)

Start-up grant

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One-off grant

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Special conditions:

Payment of the award should be made subject to (a) validation of the charity's management and recruitment procedures against Barnet's multi-agency standards for safeguarding the care of vulnerable adults; (b) membership of the new club being restricted to Barnet residents only; (c) agreement of an implementation plan to include a strategy for identifying and targeting isolated older people and milestones and targets for monitoring purposes; (d) collaboration with the Barnet Neighbourhood Group of providers of social welfare support for older people; and (e) the receipt of quarterly progress reports and an undertaking to provide an evaluation of the club at the end of twelve months.

Target grant outcomes

(a) To maintain the independence, and improve the quality of life, health and well-being, of vulnerable elderly people from the Iranian, Farsi-speaking and other minority ethnic communities and (b) to support their integration into the wider community.

Date: October 2014