

City Bridge Trust

DRAFT Funding Strategy, 2018-2023

Bridging divides

February 2017



Introduction

In the last 21 years, the City of London Corporation's charitable funder, City Bridge Trust (CBT) has made grants of over £330 million to over 7000 organisations who are working with the most disadvantaged people in every London Borough. CBT is London's largest independent funder, distributing approximately £20m each year.

We currently fund a broad range of work focused on tackling disadvantage in London, from improving Londoners' mental health, to services that strengthen London's voluntary sector.

Every five years, CBT conducts a review and assessment of the work that we do in fulfilling our current vision of a fairer London. This process helps to ensure that we remain relevant and alive to the changing needs of Londoners, in order to inform our funding strategy for the next five years and a grants budget totaling around £100 million. We are hopeful that our review process will give us the time to think deeply about our role in ensuring that London is a city where everyone can thrive.

In September 2016, the formal work for planning CBT's 2018 to 2023 funding strategy began. This document outlines a proposed **draft** strategy for CBT, which considers the use of our assets to deal with the disadvantage faced by marginalised Londoners, in order to make London a city where everyone can thrive, and rises to the challenges and opportunities that exist within London.

This draft will evolve over time through feedback and support from our committee, our staff, staff at the City of London Corporation (CoLC) and a wide range of external stakeholders from multiple sectors. The feedback on this particular draft will be gathered in multiple ways throughout February and March 2017 - full details can be found on our website: <https://www.citybridgetrust.org.uk/strategic-review/>

We expect that the feedback will be robust; and demanding of changes to this draft - some of which will be implemented in full or partly. This draft strategy shows some significant differences and similarities to CBT's current funding strategy - Investing in Londoners - and provides a clear direction of how we intend to continue addressing complex and seemingly intractable societal problems through our funding and networks.

**Sufina Ahmad,
Head of Strategic Review, City Bridge Trust**

February 2017

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Context

Every year millions of people come to London; some visit as tourists, some come here to work, but not live, others for their education, and then there are those who arrive to make London their home. It is a city constantly in flux, where new communities live alongside those Londoners who are already benefitting from the many accolades that the city has to offer, in terms of its culture, heritage, diversity, resilience and wealth.

However, not all Londoners experience all it has to offer positively. In 2016 CBT was part of a partnership of funders who funded the London Fairness Commission, which asked the question 'Is London Fair?' The Commission published its findings in March 2016, stating clearly that London was an '*extraordinary city*'. However it bore a warning too about the divides emerging in terms of the cost of living and the wealth gaps between the richest and poorest in the city. The Commission outlined clearly the impact of these, alongside the imperative to address these inequalities now.

Not long after this, 2016 became a year of unprecedented political changes in the UK, with the outcome of the Brexit vote, also resulting in a new Prime Minister. These potentially seismic shifts come on the back of financial crises, recessions, global economic slowdown, loss of faith in some institutions, significant reductions in public spending, and for civil society intense scrutiny as to their role and effectiveness in creating a fair and good society.

Regardless of politics, most agree that it is a time of uncertainty and that there is a need for bold and creative thinking. It is a time for all parts of society to come together and respond.

CBT is unique in the support and input that we can provide, due to our strong connections to civil society and the constituencies they represent through our funding, along with our strong connections to local, national and regional Government and the business sector through our trustee, the City of London Corporation. These connections are particularly significant in times when the topic of the winners and losers from globalisation are being hotly contested by so many in the UK and globally.

This draft strategy sets out CBT's ambitions to work with a wide range of partners from across society to use all of our assets, including the £100 million we will have available over this five year period, to *bridge the divides* that are so well-evidenced in our city, and make this a city where everyone can thrive. CBT is not alone in wanting to succeed in this - it has dominated many of our discussions with external stakeholders, as well as being the subject of consultations we have been invited to participate in, including the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan's consultation in late 2016 exploring his Office's role in making London *a city for all Londoners*.

From 2018 to 2023, this strategy acknowledges that further significant changes may lie ahead, globally or even regionally through another Mayoral election and Local Government elections. However, independent funders like us, many of whom have had a legacy over several hundred years, are able to offer constancy and continued commitment to communities during these most uncertain of times.

Who has been involved in developing this draft strategy

CBT has built the evidence base for our next strategy through working collaboratively and meaningfully with Londoners and key stakeholders from all sectors linked to our work. Stakeholders have been engaged through face-to-face group and one-to-one meetings; attending and contributing to various conferences, workshops and meetings; commissioning an independent grantee perception survey through the Center (sic) for Effective Philanthropy (227 anonymous responses received); launching an online survey open to all (62 responses received); and through our social media hashtag #BridgingLondon. This is a conversation that will continue until this strategy is agreed, and beyond.

Since August 2016 we have engaged with over 500 people to help inform its thinking. A list of the 300 people who have contributed to the review, along with a brief summary of how they have been engaged can be found on our [website](#). So far, the audiences we have connected to most are:

- a) Londoners
- b) Grantees
- c) Civil society organisations
- d) Policy makers - with a focus on London and communities of interest
- e) Local and Regional Government
- f) Funders - national, local, regional and sector support bodies for funders like ACF and London Funders
- g) Social Investment Market
- h) City of London Corporation Members and officers
- i) City Bridge Trust Staff

The details of the Strategic Review were also promoted at the following events, but no lists exist of the exact people in attendance:

1. **London Conference, 16.11.16** - A large number of people engaged with us directly at our exhibitor stand, and through the social media hashtag for the event #LonConf2016. The conference was attended by mostly private sector organisations, as well as a good range of civil society and public sector colleagues.
2. **Greater London Volunteering Conference, 18.11.16** - CBT co-hosted a workshop with London Funders on funding and CBT's Strategic Review, and 50 people mainly from civil society organisations came along.

To further support the development of this review, we have commissioned the following research:

- a) A London Needs Analysis - Literature Review, *Olivia Dix*. This was published in October 2016, and is available on our website.
- b) Grantee Perception Survey, *Center (sic) for Effective Philanthropy*. In December 2016, the survey findings were finalised and a summary along with a summary slide pack of the findings are available on our website.

c) Funding Best Practice, *Rob Bell*.

The final report will be completed by mid-February 2017, and published to our website.

d) Mapping the London Funding Ecology, *Collaborate CIC*.

The concept of a funding ecology relates to research commissioned by the Big Lottery Fund and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (UK Branch), which was delivered by Collaborate CIC. The research explored the theory that funders should consider themselves as operating within an ecosystem, and then provided suggestions of how this could be successfully applied. For this strategy, CBT has discussed the concept of mapping the London funding ecology, in order to benefit both funders and the organisations that seek to work with them. To begin the process of defining the London funding ecology, we have initially requested that Collaborate CIC completes a market scoping exercise of us, and reports back on its findings. This exercise will be completed by mid-February 2017, and then published to our website.

e) Social Investment Scoping Report, *Eva Varga*.

This is an options paper exploring the potential role of social investment in CBT's work in the future. This report will be finalised by mid-February 2017, and then published to our website.

CBT is immensely grateful to everyone who has so generously given up their time to share their expertise with us. A diverse range of views has been expressed to-date, and this draft strategy is our first attempt to gather the themes and ideas that were expressed in such a way that enables us to add real value.

Summary of feedback so far

This section summarises some of the common themes that have emerged from the feedback collected to-date. Fuller notes of the overarching feedback are available on our website.

Funder relationships

Most agreed that there would always be a degree of power imbalance between funders and those they fund, but the following ideas were offered to address this imbalance:

- Funders need to be more transparent and proportionate in their approaches.
- Funders need to have clarity of vision and purpose to inform their work.
- Funders need to better utilise their entire monetary and non-monetary asset base.

Future of Civil Society

The financial burdens faced by civil society organisations was discussed frequently, with many fearing that the sector was at a crisis/tipping point, due to the rising levels of demand on services, and the growing levels of inequality and poverty. Some common themes linked to these discussions included:

- a) The role of both Innovation and the ‘tried and tested’.
- b) The need to build a thriving civil society.
- c) The importance of offering development support to civil society organisations.

Life for Londoners

London and Londoners were spoken about in a myriad of positive ways, with many referencing the breadth of communities represented within the city, London’s history and its future. Expressions of anxiety and fear about the future of London following the political and economic unrest in 2016 were cited in most meetings. The overarching points relating to this can be summarised as:

- a) The importance of speaking truth to power.
- b) The acknowledgement that London is the most unequal city in the world.
- c) The recognition that many of the issues stakeholders address operate within complex systems.

CBT’s Approaches

CBT was discussed in positive terms in many of the meetings held to-date, and was seen as a much-needed part of the London funding landscape. The following discussion points were commonly referred to in relation to our approaches:

- a) CBT does a lot well, including the effectiveness of some of its funding processes, and should build on this in the next strategy.
- b) For the future, CBT was encouraged to have a vision that was clear, ambitious and measurable, with fewer funding priorities, and clearer communication about the full extent of its work and asset base.
- c) CBT was encouraged to use its full asset-base and support organisations to create links to other sectors through its networks.

Summary of CBT's next funding strategy

Like many independent funders, CBT is committed to tackling some of the toughest social issues facing the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups in 21st century society. Our intention has been to conduct a Strategic Review that is robust, of its time, and effectively takes in to consideration and reflects the diversity of views expressed by internal and external stakeholders, which have been gathered in multiple ways.

A visual representation of the strategy is included on page 14 of this document. The key points to highlight are:

1. This strategy is anchored in and led by a renewed vision and set of values. The vision makes clearer our commitment to supporting marginalised and disadvantaged Londoners, in order to reduce the inequalities they face. We have also expanded our values base, and what we mean by each of these. It is our hope that a shared commitment to our vision and values will form the basis of the partnerships we enter in to with the groups that we support.
2. The focus of the upcoming consultation will be to articulate our funding priorities for the next strategy. At the moment, we are referring to these as:
 - Place based funding
 - Addressing inequalities
 - Transitions
 - Fairness and voice

The starting point for all investments will be our vision and values. There was feedback that our current Investing in Londoners strategy was too programme and process led, and so we hope that by introducing more flexibility and breadth to what we will fund, we will be able to continue to fund great work more effectively. We know that we will still have clearly articulated priorities, but these will be determined by the learning we gather from our networks, our partners and our funding portfolio.

3. The approaches we use to fund our partners, along with our funder 'plus' offer will be aligned in order to provide us with a clear depiction of our asset base, and how we intend to use it. We want to avoid parts of our funding offer working in isolation, and we are committed to implementing processes that are flexible, creative and proportionate.
4. The strategy that we set out for 2018 will have changed by 2023. There is so much uncertainty ahead of us, in terms of: Brexit, a general election, a mayoral election and the overwhelming feedback from stakeholders that there are communities and civil society organisations that are in crisis. It is important therefore to have a strategy that is committed to adapting and learning, which looks at where it is making progress and where it needs to change, in response to these uncertainties.
5. We have uploaded a Frequently Asked Questions document to our website, which we will update regularly, to respond to any comments or questions posed to us on this draft version of the strategy.

CBT's next funding strategy

For our next strategy, we believe that by *bridging divides* that exist within London, we can help to make London a city that works for everyone. We will use all of our knowledge, networks and assets to champion London's biggest asset - its people. This strategy renews our commitment to remain ambitious about the impact and influence we can have as a funder to make positive social change happen.

CBT has a clear mandate to serve Londoners and the communities they connect to, as the CoLC's charitable funder, and we do this predominantly through funding civil society, as well as having clear links to local, regional and national Government, the private sector and the wider funding ecology. We intend to make better use of these assets and networks in our next strategy.

CBT has shown that it can pick brilliant organisations to fund; and can fund in ways that are considered creative and effective. This draft strategy enables us to play to these strengths. It places vision and values at the heart of the decision making process, rather than themes and outcomes alone, and it expands the ways in which we can support organisations through our monetary and non-monetary assets.

It is a draft strategy that listens to the feedback provided, urging us to be flexible in our approaches and not to assume expertise on social issues, and instead empower communities, Londoners and organisations on the ground to tell us what they need in order to thrive. The various 'parts' of the strategy can be summarised as follows:

- **CBT's vision and mission**

CBT's revised vision is to create a city in which marginalised and disadvantaged Londoners can thrive. This vision will sit at the heart of all of our funding and non-funding decisions.

This strategy builds on our current vision, and enables us to remain alive to the fast pace at which the needs of these Londoners are changing. It speaks to the feedback we received that London should be a city that works for everyone, and that to achieve this we need to use our entire asset-base, as well as understand that the inequalities that are experienced exist within complex and multi-faceted systems.

- **CBT's values**

CBT is seeking to partner with organisations that share our values, which are articulated in our current Investing in Londoners strategy as independence, inclusion and integrity. Going forwards we have defined our over-arching value base as follows:

1. Inclusion and representation

- We believe that we should work in such a way that is both of and for our community. We will work hard to ensure that as an organisation we represent and reflect the diversity of London's communities in all aspects of our work.

2. Care for the environment

- As global resources dwindle, and the pollution levels in London increase at an alarming pace, we will prioritise reducing our carbon footprint through our work, and encourage the care and understanding of the environment.

3. Early action

- Whilst we know that we will always fund services at the acute end of the need, we will be a strong advocate for creating a society that acts earlier. We believe that in order to achieve this, we need to work with partners that have a strong commitment to learning, and have expertise and a successful track-record in the work that they do.

4. Working in ways that support Londoners, communities and sectors to come together

- Fulfilling our vision relies on us working together with partners from across London and beyond in order to support the development of new and existing approaches. Successfully supporting people and communities that are marginalised and disadvantaged insists on people coming together, learning from each other and then effecting lasting change.

5. Being adaptive and creative, with a clear sense of purpose

- We will commit to learning from our own work and that of others, in order to demonstrate and improve the impact that we are achieving through our work. We know that a creative approach by us as a funder will provide the people we support with more opportunities to thrive.

Our vision and mission will be the rationale behind why we do the work that we do, and if we feel we have strayed unnecessarily from this purpose then we will work with our partners to return to this.

At CBT, we have been privileged to work with some brilliant organisations that have effected massive positive changes for Londoners. We believe that great organisations do great work, and this is what we want to fund.

In order to make funding decisions, we will ask those applying for our funding how they live our values in their day-to-day work. We think that this approach will make us less transactional as a funder, and result in us working with the people who gain our funding or non-monetary support as our partners.

When this strategy is implemented we will detail in full what the values above mean to us. We know that our partners will sometimes express these values in different ways to us, and we will take this in to consideration in our assessments. It is our intention that our funder 'plus offer will enhance the way in which partners deliver on these values too.

• **What CBT will fund**

CBT still intends to have clearly defined interests and priorities that we support, which we will promote in many different ways in order to ensure that London

benefits from our funding. We want to work together with communities to find the best ideas, projects and organisations to support.

1. Place based funding

This priority is about communities in the wider sense, encompassing both geographical places and communities of people that are marginalised or disadvantaged. We want to fund activities that are important to them; that help them to (re)build community assets; and in some cases even back projects that could result in positively and dramatically changing the prospects of a community long-term.

This funding could help to support great community engagement work, such as a place-based giving scheme, or great youth work, and champion the work of these active and engaged Londoners that are working hard to ensure that all Londoners benefit from this great city.

We know that there are many different communities in London, and we are interested in supporting them to become more empowered, so that they can be in charge of creating the differences they want to see and are given the tools to unlock their potential and creativity.

2. Addressing inequalities

The socio-economic and health inequalities experienced in London are well-known to many of the organisations we work with. London is a city where the richest and poorest can live side-by-side, without ever truly crossing paths. These inequalities are then exacerbated further for disadvantaged and marginalised communities in other parts of their lives, such as the well-documented examples of disabled people being less likely to gain employment or people from black and minority ethnic communities being more likely to have mental health issues, and not have access to the right services and support.

We are interested in exploring further the idea of funding projects that seek to tackle these inequalities that Londoners experience, as well as backing organisations that support people who are at the edges of our society and help to bring them in to the centre of society too.

3. Transitions

We want to help Londoners to thrive, and in order for them to do this there are often a range of barriers to overcome. This priority considers funding projects that enable Londoners to make the transition in their life that is important to them. This could be a young person wanting to break out of the cycle of being in and out of education or employment, to moving in to long-term and sustained employment. It could be support for a survivor of domestic abuse to leave their relationship and begin the journey of re-building their life.

We know that making successful transitions can be difficult, and often there are many other steps to take before a person can achieve their original goal. This requires organisations and communities to work together in the best interest of the person making the transition, because getting the right support does change lives.

4. Fairness and voice

Until we have representation at all levels, many assert a fair and equal society is near impossible to achieve. This funding priority looks at how best to support individuals and communities to develop voice, leadership and resilience. It also thinks about how to support ideas which will result in London being a city where everyone can thrive, and not the few, and where everyone has the rights to experience fairness.

We believe there are many ways to fulfil a fairer London through culture, environment, inclusion, participation, communities, public spaces and much more. For us it is important that every interaction or project that we support enhances the lustre of London's civil society.

We know that there are likely to be a real diversity of ideas that we consider through the four headings above. As the strategy is developed and delivered, we are also likely to pull out certain themes and ideas that we want to explore more strategically.

- **Funder 'plus' support and CBT's toolbox**

We will commit to a funder 'plus' programme and a funding offer that shows a myriad of creative ways in which we will support our partners. These sections are intended to show a coherent offer of how we will make use of our asset base. This will include core funding, small grants, long-term grants, access to CBT's cross-sectoral networks, consultancy support, exit strategy discussions etc.

The support provided will be aligned to the priorities that we have outlined in our vision, mission, and values. It also enables us to offer further support to organisations who want to build on the ways in which they meet our shared values.

The exact details of the tools and approaches that we will use will be developed and shared with you as we develop and implement the next strategy.

- **CBT's ambitions**

This section states the five key ambitions that we will commit to for the next five years, which can be summarised as making our processes as effective as they can be, working collaboratively, taking on leadership responsibilities, using all of our assets well, creating more giving, and encouraging learning between London, our regions, the UK and the world.

As the strategy evolves we will share examples of how we have achieved those ambitions, as well as working in partnership with others to consider new ways in which we could fulfil them.

These ambitions are in many ways the principles or baselines that we will adopt in order to deliver this strategy successfully.

- **A strategy that adapts and learns**

It is our privilege to be a funder, and we want to ensure that we are fulfilling the vision set out in this strategy by building in time to reflect on and learn from the work that we are doing. This section also acknowledges the feedback that greater learning could have been gathered from our current strategy in order to inform and influence our own work, and that of our current partners.

We will commit to learning from this strategy on an ongoing basis, as well as ensuring that we conduct a formal review of our work on an annual basis, with support from a range of internal and external partners. If we need to make some changes to our work then we will work with others to think about how best to do this.

City Bridge Trust - Funding Strategy, 2018-2023 [DRAFT ONE]

Bridging divides

CBT's vision and mission	CBT's values	What CBT will fund	Funder 'plus' support	CBT's toolbox	CBT's ambitions	A strategy that learns & adapts
<p>Our vision is for London to be a city where disadvantaged and marginalised individuals and communities can thrive.</p> <p>We want to bridge divides, reduce inequality, mainstream the marginalised and grow more cohesive communities for a London that serves everyone.</p> <p>Our mission is to use all of our knowledge, networks and assets to champion London's biggest asset - its people.</p> <p>As the City of London Corporation's charitable funder we are here to serve Londoners and the communities they connect to. We make these links directly, as well as through civil society, local, regional & national Government, the private sector and the wider funding ecology.</p>	<p>We believe that for London to be a city that works for everyone, we must live the following values in our work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusion & representation 2. Care for the environment 3. Early action - creating a society that acts earlier 4. Working in ways that support Londoners, communities & sectors to come together 5. Being adaptive & creative, with a clear sense of purpose <p>We want to work with partners who share these values</p>	<p>As a funder working in London, we want to support great organisations, doing great work in pursuit of our vision, mission and values</p> <p>Our funding priorities/themes will be informed by research and an ongoing consultation process, which the CBT Committee will be actively leading and informing.</p> <p>We are currently considering these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place based funding Addressing inequalities Transitions Fairness & voice 	<p>In order to support our partners to be the best they can be, we will offer them all access to the following support:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organisational development support 2. Networking & convening 3. Access to our cross-sectoral networks and partners 4. Support to develop partnerships 5. Investment readiness support 6. Exit strategy 7. Eco-audits 	<p>These are the ways in which we will give our money away:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core funding 2. Small & large grants 3. Short & long term commitments 4. Ideas fund 5. Match funding 6. Access to giving 7. Strategic initiatives 8. Social Investment, including investment readiness options 9. Research & learning 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our processes will be fair, representative & proportionate. 2. We will work collaboratively with our partners; leading & influencing when needed. 3. We will use all of our assets to support Londoners. 4. We will encourage more & better giving for the benefit of Londoners. 5. We will encourage learning between London, our regions, the UK & the world. 	<p>Every year we will review if the approaches laid out in this strategy are working.</p> <p>We will be clear about the things we want to change, and the things we want to carry on doing.</p>

CBT's next steps

CBT feels that this strategy represents an exciting next step for us as a funder. It signals clearly our intentions to work differently with a wide range of existing stakeholders, as well as bringing in a range of new stakeholders, to support us in our work.

We want to work with internal and external stakeholders to develop the next versions of the strategy in the coming months. In particular we are keen to co-create the interests and detail that will sit within our funding priorities, as well as gathering your views on how best to express our values. We will also be working with a range of partners to think about the most creative and straightforward ways in which we can develop our funder 'plus' and funding tools.

Please check our website to find out the ways in which we will engage you in these next steps.