



Bridging Divides:

Year 2 Review –
Reflections &
Recommendations

Yr 2 Bridging Divides Review

- After two years of our five-year [Bridging Divides](#) strategy, our learning partner, Renaisi assessed our progress.
- Here are the highlights and some recommendations of how we can amend our offer and working practices in the future.
- Our work towards being a values-led learning organisation gave us huge support during the COVID Crisis, enabling agility, fast collaboration and flexibility to meet ever changing needs.
- *Please note: this report was written before COVID -19 but reflects on its impact and future implications.*

Impact & Learning



Bridging Divides: Progress

- Significant progress on embedding values and becoming a learning organisation.
- Substantial changes to our offer
- Important progress on strategic work with the City of London Corporation and Bridge House Estates.
- The COVID-19 crisis tested our ability to be agile, adaptable and responsive, as well as our preparedness for change
- Outstanding work includes: monitoring the turnaround time for applications, further review of the Funder Plus offer, and updating the application rate analysis.



BD strategy: Reflections

- The mission remains the same, but the wording of some aims and objectives has changed.
- Some staff felt delivery of the strategy was stymied due to limited time and resources being allocated to operationalising the strategy early on
- There is still work to be done to become a more committed relational funder as well as a high-volume funder
- Exploring approaches that put grantees first may provide opportunities to develop the Trust's approach to working with organisations in future.
- The strategy is high-level, allowing for flexibility, but COVID- 19 has created a completely different context: hence the strategy may need to be reviewed in order to respond appropriately to the crisis in the medium-long term.



BD strategy: Reflections

- The core elements of what the Trust funds, the Funder Plus offer and the wider ‘toolbox’ of support are fully developed and embedded in the Trust’s approach, requiring less emphasis in the second year of Bridging Divides.
- Staff are excited and supportive of ‘Funder Plus’, but the offer needs further clarification
- The core funding offer needs to be clarified and re-launched.
- There is an appetite for the Trust to review whether it is reaching all groups that are in need of support.
- Regular feedback from grantees will help to ensure that the funder plus offer helps to address their priority needs effectively.



Bridging Divides Spend 2019-20

2019/20 FINANCIAL YEAR:

LIVE PROGRAMMES

Bridging Divides



Grants
251



Value
£24.6M

Strategic Initiatives



Grants
16



Value
£2.8M

HISTORIC PROGRAMMES

Investing in Londoners



Grants
4



Value
390K

Anniversary Programme



Grants
6



Value
£1.1M



Values

At the start of Bridging Divides, we committed to being a led by our Values:

- Progressive
- Adaptive
- Collaborative
- Inclusive
- Environmentally Responsible
- Representative



Values - Progress

- 73% of staff feel; positive and are motivated by our values
- 'Adaptive' and 'Collaborative' were two values were seen as more thoroughly implemented.
- 'Representative' and 'Inclusive' need to be more distinctly clarified as they can be seen as interchangeable.
- There may be a risk that the Environmentally Responsible value is de-prioritised due to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis.



Team Learning Culture

- Staff increasingly understand the Trust is a Learning Organisation
- There is work to be done but enthusiasm and willingness to do it
- More could be done to embed and formalise learning opportunities within the team
- There is an appetite to develop more outwardly-focused learning for external audiences.
- Structures and processes need to be put in place to ensure learning is embedded
- An Impact and Learning Working group could help develop the Trust's learning culture.
- Greater clarity is needed around professional development training



Impact and Learning strategy

- The Trust is currently better at sharing learning internally than externally - there is an appetite to produce more learning for an external audience.
- The Trust could do more to use the data that it already holds on grantees. The recent appointment of a Data Analyst is a positive step towards making better use of this data.
- There is an appetite for the team to have access to more structured information and data about grantees' impact and other trends, which the Data Analyst could help to put in place



Recommendations

- Review and adapt the Bridging Divides strategy for COVID context.
- Review Funder Plus and Toolbox support offer to meet highest priority needs of the sector
- Analyse and compare the organisations and sectors we supports to ensure we are representative
- Explore impact and potential of co-opted Committee member in discussions and decision-making
- Ensure that internal learning and development capacity is focused proportionately on the most significant areas of the strategy notably 'what CBT funds' and Funder Plus
- Formally review, document and publish changes to our funding processes and decision-making that have taken place due to COVID-19, with a view to identifying what practices to keep or change.



Recommendations

- If continued focus on embedding the values remains a priority, it is recommended that the Trust focus on the following:
 - Refine and clarify the definitions of 'inclusive' and 'representative'
 - Creates a dedicated environmental working group
- Consider a specific project or programme to provide structure to its collaboration with grantees, eg trialling a participatory grant-making programme.
- Create a transparent blueprint for the types of training staff can access, and when.
- Create an Impact and Learning working group
- Co-Heads of Impact and Learning focus on identifying external learning priorities and producing learning outputs for an external audience.
- Develop a regular way to share more structured information and data about grantees' impact and other trends



Get in Touch!

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<https://grantadvisor.org.uk/profile.php?ein=980>

