

## **FUNDING: East London & City Partnership to deliver grassroots funding for the smallest community groups**

**Community groups with a turnover of less than £20,000 a year may soon be able to access up to £5,000 for their community projects as part of a government scheme called Grassroots Grants. Grassroots Grants will provide much-needed access to small grants for local community groups.**

A partnership between St Katherine & Shadwell Trust and four local CVS in East London – the East End & City Grassroots Grants partnership (HCVS, NVSC, City.COMM and Community Organisations Forum) – has been established to deliver this programme in Hackney, City, Newham and Tower Hamlets. If this partnership is successful in its bid to the Grassroots Grants Programme, then over £1.3million will be available to small community groups in the four Boroughs over the next three years. Furthermore as part of the endowment building match element of Grassroots Grants government will release even more funding if the partnership can demonstrate it can secure money from private sources to match the programme.

Jenny Dawes, Director of SKST said *'After three years this partnership wants to ensure each of the Boroughs has a dedicated pot of funding for community groups that has been funded by private donations to the programme.'*

Jake Ferguson, Chief Executive Officer of HCVS said *'This presents a real opportunity for government to invest in local projects which often don't have the capacity or track record to apply to other grants programmes. This funding could not have come at a better time for Hackney groups'.*

Sarah Ruiz, Director of NVSC, said *'Whilst the £1.3m is not going to change the world, it will provide some much needed funding for new groups wanting to deliver small scale activities, especially at a time when there has been a loss of small grants programmes across the country'*

Mark Pudge, Chief Executive of CITY.COMM said *"This is a great opportunity for the VCS to work with the private sector to support local people to deliver grassroots, community focused activities'*

Barry Stoye, Chief Executive of Community Organisations Forum said *'This is an example of the voluntary and community sector coming together to provide local benefit to those that need it the most'*

Some of the benefits of Grassroots Grants include:

- improved access to funding for grass roots organisations
- more funding invested in the organisations
- greater capacity to respond to local issues
- stronger communities through increased local impact
- a fast turnaround for groups waiting for decisions about funding (the East End & City Grassroots Grants partnership)

Decisions about who will deliver this programme in each of the Boroughs will be made by the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July. Government expects that local groups will be able to apply for funding in the Autumn.

#### **Notes of editors:**

1. Local third sector funders across the country have been invited by the Community Development Foundation (CDF) to apply to become a local partner in delivering the £130million Grassroots Grants programme in their area.
2. Grassroots Grants will provide much-needed access to small grants for local community groups and organisations in England who will apply for funds from a local funder later this year. It will also help develop sustainable funding for them through an endowment match challenge.
3. The Community Development Foundation (CDF) is administering the programme nationally and the search has begun for local funders to ensure that the money gets to where it is needed in each community and to run the endowment match challenge.
4. The £130 million fund, which will run from 2008-2011 will be divided into two parts: an £80 million small grants fund for community organisations; and a groundbreaking £50 million endowments programme to enable local funders to generate additional donations on a matched basis and invest them in endowments, thereby building their capacity to provide long-term funding for frontline community organisations.
5. The East London & City Partnership is a consortium led by St Katharine & Shadwell Trust and encompassing four top-tier areas: City of London, London Borough of Hackney, London Borough of Newham and London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
6. The members of the consortium are: CITY.COMM (CC), Community Organisations Forum (COF), Hackney Council for Voluntary Service (HCVS), Newham Voluntary Service Council (NVSC) and St Katharine & Shadwell Trust (SKST).
7. If the bid is successful St Katharine & Shadwell Trust will manage the grants programme for the City of London and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. CITY.COMM and Community Organisations Forum will assist with the provision of outreach and capacity building support. HCVS will manage the grants programme in the London Borough of Hackney. Newham VSC will manage the grants programme in the London Borough of Newham.

The East London & City Grassroots Grants Partnership is a grant and endowment building consortium led by St Katharine & Shadwell Trust, with HCVS, NVSC, COF and CITY.COMM.

**Have you ever had your funding cut from a statutory provider with little notice?**

A strong COMPACT which reflects the voluntary sector's needs in Hackney could help prevent this by ensuring public statutory agencies abide by agreed guidelines. Come along to one of our Compact Consultation events in June and make sure Hackney gets a refreshed COMPACT we all want to sign up to. **Click here for more information:** <http://www.hcvs.org.uk/en/pages/compact08.aspx>