

## ANNUAL REVIEW 2008 | 2009

London's voluntary and community sector in partnership with Europe to promote social inclusion

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“The key challenge facing the London Skills Agenda is to achieve an effective balance between the vocational demands of those working in London and the vocational needs of Londoners living in London and, thereby, recognising that they are not always one and the same. Such a recognition implies that employer-led strategies need to be complemented by sub-regional, area-based initiatives with leadership by residents.”

LONDON’S LEARNING CAPITAL A Tale of Two Cities | LVSTC, 1999



# CHAIR'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to write this Foreword to the LVSTC Annual Report covering our work over 2008–2009. The period has seen the full establishment of the 2007–2013 Programme of the European Structural Funds as they have finally emerged from the previous 2000–2006 Programme.

As this Report describes in detail, voluntary and community sector providers have generally found the transition very difficult with the overall contraction of European Union funding for the UK and with the teething problems of setting up new bidding rounds. The increasing constraints of 'due diligence' have placed heavy demands on bidders from the larger organisations right down to the small groups applying for Community Grants. In addition, the demand for larger projects has disadvantaged the more focussed and targeted approach of the third sector.

Looking back, we had a memorable role in marking the transition of the European Social Fund from the 2000–2006 to the 2007–2013 Programmes. We were asked by the Government Office for London and the London Development Agency to lead in the organisation of an unprecedented Celebration Event. Undaunted by the challenges, we attracted over 330 participants, 30 exhibitors and nine project presentations, each involving workers and users. The enjoyable occasion can be relived on the LVSTC website!

With regard to the European Regional Development Fund, the loss of community economic development has significantly reduced access for our sector. Inevitably, the case for sector-specific ERDF Technical Assistance has been insufficient to attract match-funding. We continued to work closely with the Department for Work and Pensions ESF Division on the England 2007–2013 Operational Programme as well as with the Mayor to promote and lead our sector's input into the promotion of the new 2007–2013 Programmes: the London ESF Regional Framework and the London ERDF Operational Plan. Over the period we supported GOL in closing the 2000–2006 Programme and GOL showed appreciation in agreeing to extend the funding of both our ESF and ERDF Technical Assistance to June 2008. Also, we consolidated work with the London Development Agency via the new European Programmes Management Unit for the 2007–2013 Programme.

Again, I would like to thank the elected Board for their immense support in an extremely challenging year. In particular, I would like to commend the substantial efforts of the staff in a period of redundancy where seven posts disappeared as a result of completed projects. I also, extend our thanks to our Director and Management Team for their stewardship.

Finally, I give our full appreciation for the support of our funders: the Government Office for London, the European Commission, London Councils, the Big Lottery Fund, the City Bridge Trust, the City Parochial Foundation and the London Development Agency.

The economic downturn has made life worse for so many voluntary and community groups. Funding support on all sides, including the EU, has become more difficult to secure. The obstacles facing LVSTC, as an advocate of the sector, are increasing. We must be ever-more resourceful. Let's hope that 2010, as The European Year Against Poverty, will give us all more confidence and momentum!

Simin Azimi – November 2009

# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This Report and Review covers the work of the London Voluntary Sector Training Consortium over 2008 and 2009 across the financial year, for which abstract audited accounts are included. Our work has continued to focus on the needs of London's voluntary and community sector service providers in the development of vocational training and economic regeneration as they affect groups and areas excluded from the benefits of economic growth.

Since incorporation in 1989, we have devoted our time to support voluntary organisations in accessing finance from the European Structural Funds. A few explanatory notes may be helpful, here. These Funds have been established by the European Union to promote economic and social cohesion with a focus on combating social exclusion. As recently restated in the EU's Fourth Cohesion Report, in May 2007, they promote government programmes to fight poverty.

Over the main period of this Report April 2008 to March 2009, LVSTC has been actively involved in helping voluntary groups to run projects under two main Funds within the 2007–13 Programme:

- **European Social Fund** – strengthening economic and social cohesion by improving employment opportunities
- **European Regional Development Fund** – strengthening regional competitiveness and innovation, creating and safeguarding sustainable jobs and ensuring sustainable development

We've worked in the context of key government policy initiatives:

- the UK Government's Welfare to Work Programme as a feature of the UK National Employment Action Plan: approved at the 1998 Cardiff Summit of the European Council of Ministers and annually revised, most recently in October 2008 as the UK Employment Chapter under the UK National Reform Programme
- the UK Government's Learning and Skills Act 2000, which established the Learning and Skills Council
- the setting up, in Spring 2000, of the Greater London Assembly and, specifically, the London Development Agency: to oversee economic regeneration; to formulate the London Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action; and to develop the regional response to the National Skills Strategy ('21st Century Skills': 2003) more recently developed by the Mayor's new London Skills and Employment Board as London's Future.
- the realignment of the EU Structural Funds from the former 2000–2006 under Agenda 2000, involving delivery through the Government Office for London and now by the Mayor, under Agenda 2007 of the 2007–2013 Programme delivered by the LDA.
- the UK Government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal as a feature of the UK National Action Plan on Social Inclusion approved at the 2001 Summit of the European Council of Ministers and revised, most recently in September 2008, in anticipation of the European Year Against Poverty, 2010.

# VISION AND MISSION

The LVSTC was set up as a consortium of voluntary sector training providers and was legally incorporated as a charity in October 1989.

Our **vision** is:

“to be the lead organisation in London for the strategic development of effective training in the voluntary and community sector to meet the needs of socially excluded groups.”

In pursuit of the above, our **mission** is to offer technical assistance to providers in the voluntary and community sector:

## QUALITY SECTOR

- to help ensure that more potential trainees from all London Boroughs have information about and access to voluntary / community sector provision;
- to offer comprehensive technical support services to voluntary sector providers including telephone advice, e-mail support, referral systems, information bulletins, training for groups on funding applications, match-funding, quality controls, monitoring systems, auditing procedures, trans-national partners, claim forms;
- to work for the improvement of the European, national and regional administrative systems for ESF/ERDF so that voluntary / community groups are not jeopardised by slack decision-making and late payments;
- to inform voluntary and community sector providers running EU-funded projects on emerging European trends in vocational training, financial/business planning so that they can continue to thrive in the new EU funding regime emerging from the Agenda 2007 reform;
- to assist voluntary / community sector providers in networking and developing cross-sectoral partnerships at local, regional, national and European levels.

## TRAINING FUNDS

- to sustain and increase the amount of ESF and other European funds for the voluntary and community sector training providers working with unemployed and disadvantaged people in London;
- to ensure that policy makers continue to recognise the need for ESF to meet the needs of disadvantaged people in London, and the importance that this provision is independently managed by elected committees representing and accessible to users.

## ECONOMIC REGENERATION

- to stimulate the formation of partnerships involving voluntary sector providers to encourage solidarity rather than unfettered competition;
- to increase access and take-up of ERDF co-finance by voluntary / community sector providers;
- to enhance voluntary sector input into the London Development Agency;
- to promote voluntary / community sector participation in schemes of neighbourhood and community economic development.

## **DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY**

- to promote continued and effective voluntary sector involvement in the decision-making process at local, regional, national and European levels;
- to consolidate the number of LVSTC members and affiliates ensuring that these reflect voluntary sector providers' geographical spread across London as well as their interest in ethnicity, gender, disability and age;
- to invite and secure feedback from trainees and beneficiaries of economic regeneration on how schemes can be improved and to collaborate with voluntary sector providers to act on such recommendations.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- to contribute to the development of government strategies and programmes which promote diversity and social inclusion based on equal opportunities at local, regional, national and European levels;
- to encourage broad, inclusive participation within LVSTC through the non-discriminatory recruitment of members, elected Board, staff, clients, contacts and volunteers;
- to maintain and develop a diverse range of services, which meet the needs of all voluntary and community groups seeking to combat social exclusion through use of the European Structural Funds in London.

## **RACIAL EQUALITY**

- to recognise and tackle institutional racism;
- to prioritise the formulation and implementation of the LVSTC Race Equality Action Plan;
- to work positively to promote organisations of ethnic minorities, who are the main ESF beneficiary sub-group of the unemployed/vulnerable employed in London, as providers under the European Structural Funds.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

- to promote sound environmental management policies and practices in our work;
- to increase awareness of environmental responsibilities amongst Board, staff, service users and suppliers;
- to work with other agencies locally, nationally and at the EU levels to promote appropriate environmental policies.

## **HEALTH**

We shall address the priorities of the London Health Commission through:

- our Evaluation, Learning and Mentoring Project which targets medium-size and micro-organisations led by, or working with, disabled people and/or those affected by ill-health;
- providing information and guidance on the benefits of introducing smoke-free (ie. user-friendly) workplace policies and how to access specialist support;
- promoting the availability of ESF Community Grants as a means of improving access to effective language support services for users;
- promoting awareness of the need to improve the emotional health and well being of young Londoners;

- liaising with Primary Care Trusts and facilitating opportunities to access venues for engagement, referral and progression;
- promoting the role of employers in the health and social care sectors to the voluntary and community sector.

## RESOURCES

- to ensure that LVSTC has the capacity (in terms of finance, personnel, information and equipment) to deliver quality services to the sector and partners;
- to recognise the importance of the maintenance of the Investor In People quality standard throughout the organisation;
- to ensure the Board has the appropriate knowledge and skills to steer and manage LVSTC as a sustainable organisation;
- to ensure that staff members have the requisite knowledge and skills to deliver an effective, efficient programme of activity to meet the needs of Members and other users.



*Members of Chicken Shed Theatre Group perform at the 'The London ESF Story' celebration event on Wednesday 4 June 2008*

# AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

At the operational level, LVSTC activities have continued to be guided by four sets of targeted Aims, Objectives and Outcomes:

**1. DELIVERY**    **To help voluntary and community organisations to provide high quality training/ services run by and for socially-excluded groups in London with particular attention to funds available from the European Union:**

**Awareness**

- to ensure that information on European funding reaches street-level organisations working with economically and socially excluded people;
- to promote LVSTC services and expertise through the delivery of an effective marketing strategy;

and, thereby, increase awareness of voluntary/community organisations of funding opportunities under the European Structural Funds in London.

**Access**

- to support providers in securing and managing European funding;
- to support the sector in accessing complementary UK funding;

and, thereby, increase the number of voluntary/community organisations accessing the European Structural Funds in London.

**Retention**

- to offer technical expertise and advice services to the voluntary and community sector in London;
- to provide support to organisations to enable them to provide quality training services;

and, thereby, increase the number of voluntary/community organisations sustaining access to the European Structural Funds in London.

**2. PARTNERSHIP**    **To promote the partnership of voluntary and community training/service providers with government, European Commission and Co-Financing Organisations to combat social exclusion:**

- to work closely, on the operational level, with the LDA European Programmes Management Unit;
- to work with Co-Financing Organisations, under ESF, to engage voluntary and community sector providers;
- to work with the EPMU, under ERDF, to engage voluntary and community sector providers;

and, thereby, increase the number of voluntary/community organisations engaging with cross-sectoral partnerships under the European Structural Funds in London.

### 3. STRATEGY

To lead the London voluntary and community sector in developing the strategy for learning and skills and in promoting this to policy makers:

- to promote the interests of sector training/service providers in a democratic, transparent and accountable way;
- to represent the interests of sector training/service providers to policy makers;
- to undertake action research on issues facing sector providers with external funding;

and, thereby, increase the influence of the voluntary/community sector on policy formation under the European Structural Funds in London.

### 4. GOVERNANCE

To deliver LVSTC Aims, Objectives and Outcomes within a framework of effective governance:

- to ensure accountability through effective governance;
- to secure adequate resources, systems and structures;
- to develop the Membership base with the active involvement of Members;
- to promote the effectiveness and well-being of staff;

and, thereby, increase ownership of LVSTC by voluntary/community sector service providers.



*Exhibition stand at 'The London ESF Story' celebration event on Wednesday 4 June 2008*

# POLICY CONTEXT

As noted earlier, our work has been increasingly influenced by the anticipation and implementation of governmental policy changes at European, national and regional levels that fundamentally impact on economic regeneration programmes (including vocational guidance/training) in London.

## EUROPEAN

At the close of the UK Presidency, in December 2005, the Council of Ministers approved the EU Budget 2007–2013 triggering the countdown to Agenda 2007. Here, the context for the Structural Funds Programmes (2000–2006) and (2007–2013) have been shaped by the debate amongst member states and the EU institutions on Agenda 2000 and Agenda 2007 around the five Operational Principles of the Funds:

### Concentration

- the reduction in number and targeting of Objectives / Initiatives;
- the merger of Objectives;
- the re-designation of Objective areas.

### Partnership

- greater participation of voluntary / community sector;
- accountability of Programme Monitoring Committees;
- simplification of procedures without undermining partners.

### Programming

- diversity proofing regarding equality, poverty and environmental sustainability;
- linking national strategies on employment to those on social inclusion;
- role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as small enterprises in the social economy;
- continuity of strategic funding over seven year cycles.

### Additionality

- avoiding substitution by preserving national public expenditure levels;
- appropriate intervention rates for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with targeted Technical Assistance support;
- introducing a pilot small-grants' scheme of global grants for NGOs.

### Efficiency

- promoting transparency and streamlining of financial arrangements;
- fair and open monitoring systems;
- recognising social need in setting financial targets.

**NATIONAL** Under the former UK Presidency (January–June 1998) as part of the European Employment Strategy, member states prepared the first of their National Employment Action Plans for common submission and endorsement. ESF is the main delivery mechanism for this Strategy. The Plans are subject to annual review at the closing Summit of each alternate Presidency. They are broadly shaped by the agreed EU Employment Guidelines, which were initially based on the four pillars (employability, entrepreneurship, adaptability and equal opportunities) and which have since been revised around three key objectives:

- full employment;
- quality and productivity;
- cohesion and social inclusion.

At the end of 2003, the EU Employment Taskforce recommended supplementary priorities: increasing the adaptability of workers and enterprises; attracting more people to enter and remain on the labour market; investing more effectively in human capital and lifelong learning; and ensuring effective implementation of reforms through better governance. The UK Government responded, in October 2005, to the EU National Reform Programme: Lisbon Strategy for Jobs and Growth, with the promotion of the following three objectives:

- macroeconomic policies for jobs and growth;
- promoting productivity growth;
- increasing employment opportunity for all.

In 2001, the Department for Work and Pensions was involved, alongside government departments in the other 14 member-states of the European Union, in producing the first National Action Plan on Social Inclusion to be revised every two years (most recently in September 2008). This initiative explicitly links the EU employment and social inclusion agendas through setting targets for the European Structural Funds across four objectives:

- to facilitate participation in employment and access by all to resources, rights, goods and services;
- to prevent the risks of social exclusion;
- to help the most vulnerable;
- to mobilise all relevant bodies.

More recently, this has been consolidated by the policy of Active Inclusion based on the three principles of: an inclusive labour market; full access to services; and adequate minimum income.

The Government approach to the delivery of post-16 training has been driven by the Learning and Skills Act 2000. The bedding down of the five London local LSCs radically shifted the nature of ESF delivery through the further Government innovation of Co-Financing that is heavily dependent on the LSCs for fund distribution. The initial sub-regional approach has now being regionalised.

A key central government strategy on social inclusion was the formation of Jobcentre Plus, with the DWP as a Co-Financing Organisation across England. This required the development of strategies reaching beyond claimants to the economically inactive. Recently, this strategy was developed in the DWP Green Paper – ‘No one written off: reforming welfare to reward responsibility’ (2008).

The latter part of the period of this Report was dominated by the severe global economic downturn. Inevitably, there have been fears that the European Structural Funds would be diverted to meet the demands of cyclical rather than systemic failures. However, government reports have stressed the need for social inclusion programmes to be kept in place to avoid parking the most disadvantaged at the end of an even longer queue. Fortunately, the revaluation of the UK Programme, as a result of currency fluctuations, offered room for manoeuvre in sustaining the commitment to those people furthest from the labour market.

## REGIONAL

The political context for the London agenda on economic development was re-shaped by the election in May 2008 of the new Mayor to head the Greater London Assembly and to appoint the London Development Agency. Prospects were influenced by the establishment of the London Skills and Employment Board under the Mayor with new powers and the publication by the LSEB, in 2008, of ‘London’s Future – The Skills and Employment Strategy for London 2008–2013’.

Several of the LDA functions directly impacted on the vocational training and economic regeneration promoted by voluntary and community sector providers:

- leading in developing and implementing regional economic strategies;
- promoting sound, physical and economic regeneration;
- taking a leading role on EU Structural Funds;
- developing business support;
- promoting technology transfer;
- improving the skills base of the region;
- developing the London Skills Agenda;
- promoting the London Skills and Employment Board as the Regional Skills Partnership.

The London European Social Fund (ESF) Regional Framework sets out the vision for the new programme for London, highlighting the region’s key challenges and opportunities and the areas where resources are to be targeted. The vision for the new programme is to enable greater access to sustainable employment, particularly for groups experiencing multiple barriers to the labour market, and to create a more skilled and adaptable workforce for the London economy.

Under the 2007–2013 Programme, London receives the largest ESF allocation in England. There will be two national Cross Cutting Themes (CCT); Diversity and Equality and Sustainable Development, with an additional London Focus on Health as a CCT. The vision for the London ERDF Operational Programme is to promote sustainable, environmentally efficient growth in London, capitalising on London’s innovation and knowledge resources with a focus on promoting social inclusion through extending economic opportunities to communities, in areas where this is most needed.

# ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

During 2008–2009, LVSTC has continued to support London’s voluntary and community sector in accessing European funds across several key programmes under the European Structural Funds. At the invitation of governmental agencies, LVSTC has represented voluntary and community sector providers on key cross-sector working groups that have significantly influenced decisions on the shape of training provision and regeneration in London.

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT

We have participated as members of:

- **London ESF Committee and London ERDF Programme Monitoring Committee** – convened by the LDA European Programmes Management Unit to oversee the 2007–2013 Programmes in London.
- **DWP ESF (England) National Monitoring Committee** – to steer the ESF Programme in England. The involvement of LVSTC at this level has been mediated through our participation in the Third Sector European Network. In particular, we’ve contributed to the sub-committee on Innovation, Mainstreaming and Transnationality where we drafted the initial national briefing on Active Inclusion as one of six optional themes for the new Transnational Programme launched at the end of 2008.
- **European Anti-Poverty Network** – to promote the interests of voluntary and community groups combating social exclusion to the European Commission. We were vice-chair of the EAPN Structural Funds Task Force.
- **Social Policy Task Force** – to meet regularly, through EAPN (England), with the DWP to formulate interventions relating to the preparation and implementation of the UK National Action Plan on Social Inclusion.
- **UK Coalition Against Poverty** – to link activity against exclusion to the wider government anti-poverty agenda.

This representational role has been supported by an extensive range of dissemination activities that have kept us in touch with the rich diversity of providers in the voluntary and community sector, including:

- **London Euroscene** – bi-monthly circulation of ESF/ERDF newsletter and briefings to contact list of 2500+.
- **London Bytesize Euroscene** – monthly circulation, by e-bulletin, of European, and other related news, to contact list of 2500+.
- **London 2008 Training Directory** – LVSTC web-site information on over 200 groups.
- **LVSTC website** – including several pages explaining the new ESF and ERDF Programmes in London.
- **ESF London Celebration Conference** – in June 2008, with the Mayor, LDA and GOL, we led the organisation of a dual celebration of the ESF 2000–2006 and 2007–2013 Programmes under the title The London ESF Story, which attracted over 330 participants, 30 exhibits and nine project presentations from workers and users. The event was testimony to the enduring energy of voluntary and community sector providers as well as their capacity to encourage beneficiaries to communicate personal experiences in their own words.

- **The London ESF Story through third sector eyes** – LVSTC celebrated the closing ESF London ESF Programme with the publication of a critical assessment of the seven years. The narrative was supported by a timeline drawn from the contemporary accounts of *London Euroscene* and from a review of the data collected by LVSTC from 2000. Looking at both the start and finish of the period, the tenacity and vulnerability of the third sector is evident. Even so, there has been no comparable historical study and the narrative was vividly supported by a colourful poster depicting the achievements of 17 projects.

**PRACTICAL SUPPORT**

The year 2008–2009 introduced the first consolidated operational period of the new 2007–2013 ESF Programme.

**ESF PRIORITIES**

<b>Priority 1</b>	<b>Extending Employment Opportunities (£249,995,153)</b>
1.1	Improving the employability and skills of the unemployed and economically inactive people.
1.2	Employment and skills activities targeted at young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET.
1.3	Community Grants programme for those groups further from the labour market.
<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>Creating a Skilled and Adaptable Workforce (£113,038,516)</b>
2.1	Increasing the number of employees with improved basic skills levels, including English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).
2.2	Increasing the number of employees within improved level 2 skills.
2.3	Increasing the number of employees within improved level 3 to 4 skills.

In total, over the 12 months' period, LVSTC targeted 342 organisations and delivered 268 one-to-one advice surgeries to 169 third sector providers' involving a combination of in-house surgeries, telephone surgeries and project visits. As a result of our one-to-one support, 73 organisations submitted bids with 64 groups reporting success. Surgeries in the period covered a range of topics, including: applications and appeals for sector providers to ESF Co-Financing Organisations as well as advice for groups seeking alternative funding sources, organisational and strategic funding support and partnership development advice and guidance.

We also delivered 23 conferences/workshops for 876 beneficiaries, aimed at supporting sector providers in accessing, holding on and moving on from Structural Funds support. Participation levels were collated and analysed on our database, which now holds information on over 5000 voluntary and community sector providers in London.

Overall, our activities were developed under four particular project areas:

## OUTREACH

We continued to offer a general support programme to the sector. Our seminar and conference programme was aimed at achieving continuity for providers. Subjects covered included 'Tracking Beneficiaries', 'Partnership Working,' 'Project Evaluation', 'Active Inclusion', and 'Equality and Diversity'. Specific activities were LSC and DWP applicants, 'Writing Better Bids,' 'Measuring Soft Outcomes'. Workshops were also offered in support of the bidding rounds launched by the DWP and LDA.

With the increasing emphasis on partnership delivery, we've been keen to link workshops to the LVSTC Partnership Portal on the website. This enables participants to complete 'would like to meet' templates that are linked to registration and allow the event to carry detailed information about the partnership capacity and needs of groups involved. Such a tool is primarily aimed at the third sector providers, who may also be seeking help from other sectors.

We recorded 90 on-site project visits. These were made where other forms of communication were inappropriate. On-site visits have had to be made to discuss documentation or where travel to our headquarters for the beneficiary was difficult or untimely. Visits also enable advisers to meet with several staff at the same time – sometimes vital for problem-solving or in depth discussion and analysis with staff groups.

Our Helpline service covered a range of communications. Whilst the telephone is still a key medium, there has been increasingly more emphasis on electronic communications. The LVSTC database has continued to be refined and updated – enabling us to target our work and responses more efficiently. We have also been able to combine both telephone and e-mail responses, when we can directly work on and discuss documents forwarded to us for our advice and comments.

We have also continued to make major tool kits and briefings available in a central area – together with free access and download of stored materials. These included: written briefings on strategic and policy documents such as the ESF London Regional Framework, National Strategic Reference Framework and Operational Plan; regular updates on application rounds; a Marketing and Publicity Toolkit; a Partnership Guide together with a Specimen Agreement; and full information and briefings on the new ESF programme in London 2007–2013.

The powerful ThankQ LVSTC database helped us to manipulate complex information from over 5,000 organisations that include partners in ESF programmes from the public and private sectors. This has enabled us to customise targeted e-mail shots and improve communication with, and between, all provider and strategic partners in the ESF programme.

At the transnational level, we worked closely with the EPMU to publicise the London Transnational Programme. Supporting a regional conference, we championed the Active Inclusion measure that linked ESF to 2010 The European Year Against Poverty. This was followed up with a special workshop on the Year, linking third sector groups to regional, national and European expertise.

**CEEP** The Community Economic Enhancement Project (CEEP) was a LVSTC capacity building initiative funded by the Big Lottery and also match-funded by ESF through the LVSTC Technical Assistance contract with GOL and, then, with the EPMU to the end of 2008. The Project was targeted mainly at Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) groups that had grown from being micro-groups to small organisations. The quantum leap in their growth and development resulted in some experiencing difficulties in managing the change.

The CEEP team put together a package of activities to help these groups to manage their growth and development. The support packages included: diagnostic reviews and assessment on the effectiveness of organisations operational, management, ICT, and financial systems, one-to-one support visits and training of key staff, telephone surgeries, workshops and seminars on various management and IT topics and publications and briefing notes on various management and ICT topics.

Over the year, 44 groups have been enrolled onto the project as beneficiaries and received various support including ICT partnership brokerage, business and financial planning. Diagnostic reviews and assessments enabled 38 groups to strengthen their operational, management, ICT, and financial systems. By the end of the year, 12 organisations were completing Business Plans.

During the year, the team delivered 6 workshops in the following topics: writing successful bids; project management; partnership brokerage and development; achieving sustainability; fundraising; financial planning.

**SGEIP** Following our policy work on the Strategic Objective 2 Implementation Group of the London Skills Commission, we successfully completed a two-year capacity-building programme for 3100 street-level community providers, in Spring 2007. At the beginning of 2008, we were supported by the City Bridge Trust to continue our broad support for street-level micro-projects through a three-year funding package matched to ESF Technical Assistance, for a new initiative, the Small Groups Economic Inclusion Project.

The Project has pursued four main objectives in strengthening small (micro-) community provider groups involving people furthest from the labour market: to enable small groups to attract funding resources via the European Social Fund or other similar finance by providing one-to-one advice on funding and management systems; to improve the confidence and skills of groups by offering extended workshops on topics such as 'Quality Fundraising', 'Developing Ability to Deliver' and 'Strengthening Your Organisation'; to develop collaboration by brokering partnerships, each comprising between two and five groups; and to promote strategic intelligence and solidarity via regular e-bulletins.

85 organisations have received in-depth one-to-one support in applications for funding. The level of support has included: detailed advice and guidance on all sections of the application; giving detailed comments relating to applications prior to submission; helping prepare applications; helping to transfer the application to a CD to satisfy submission requirements.

Following the publication of the results of the first round of Community Grants applications, LVSTC contacted those organisations who received support either through workshops or one-to-one advice surgeries. Over 85% of those organisations were successful in their application with several requiring assistance in preparing a delivery plan prior to their meeting with the contract officer. LVSTC worked with organisations who were unsuccessful to review their applications in order that they can re-submit in the next application round.

In March, we invited SGEIP contacts to the 'Reaching Out' Conference which covered the employment and poverty agenda and third sector ESF Action at local and community levels. Two LVSTC Application Workshops were held for Community Grants, for which there was a combined attendance of 46. A further 98 were addressed by LVSTC at workshops organised by Greater London Enterprise, which manages the programme. In addition, we offered help to groups interested in accessing the Grassroots Grants programme.

**ELM** Reinforcing our capacity building support for medium-size third sector providers (including those involving people with disabilities), the City Parochial Foundation agreed, in the summer of 2008, to match-fund ESF Technical Assistance for the two-year LVSTC Evaluation, Learning and Mentoring Project to help the sector to improve the quality of provision and to extend local collaboration.

Specifically, the grant has enabled us to deliver, over two years: one-to-one support – targeted on 25 medium-size voluntary organisations through one-day workshops on Evaluation and on Mentoring and 10 hours intensive one-to-one support on evaluating their work and acting on findings; evaluation circles – support for 50 small community organisations through seven 'circles' (ie clusters of groups) involving peer-group learning on evaluation; mentoring – 25 pairs comprising medium-sized organisations guiding smaller organisations; evaluation materials – a new range of resources for those engaging with London European Programmes.

ELM supported two ESF bidding rounds: Community Grants and the LDA second Bidding Round. We gave advice on setting out evaluation frameworks to enable micro-projects to consider how they would judge the impact of the grant funding. ELM also offered follow-up assistance when application outcomes were known. We sent out e-bulletins on evaluation to build up the Project network.

Through December to January, ELM contributed to five LDA-run application workshops and organised a Partnership Workshop attended by 32 people. This workshop focused on the particular need for partnerships within the larger projects outlined in the LDA Prospectus. We also highlighted the importance of evaluation as outlined within the Prospectus. We helped to run a large partnership event for the 2nd Round which gave organisations opportunities to access partnerships. Over 220 people attended this event from over 177 organisations.

In April 2009, ELM supported another large partnership event for the LDA ESF Youth Round. This was attended by 215 from 151 organisations. ELM followed up both of these events with one-to-one advice and support for 6 large partnership bids in which we gave extensive advice on project-based evaluation. In addition, we assisted in the creation of partnership portals on the LVSTC web-site for each event where 269 interested groups registered themselves for potential partnerships.

# HUMAN RESOURCES

Having been commendably re-awarded our IIP status in June 2007, success in delivering the LVSTC promise has depended on our ability to work in three complementary areas:

- membership;
- management;
- staffing.

## MEMBERSHIP

As a member-led organisation financially dependent on Technical Assistance from the European Structural Funds, LVSTC has continued to be subject to an internal tension:

- **accountability** – a definable democratic structure of Membership;
- **inclusion** – a service delivery system available to all London provider groups in the voluntary and community sector.

This tension is reflected in the development of three LVSTC lists:

- **members** – voluntary groups registered as Full Members;
- **clients** – groups/agencies offering information for services;
- **contacts** – groups/agencies on LVSTC mailing list.

These lists have been the basis for the authority with which LVSTC has acted as a strategic partner in the development of EU programmes in London. Given our Members' active engagement in vocational support of the unemployed and the vulnerable employed, LVSTC has maintained a sharp focus on issues related to vocational training and guidance under the European Social Fund as well as to regeneration under the European Regional Development Fund.

During the period, we have maintained a positive attitude to voluntary and community groups working with the vulnerable employed as well as to voluntary/community groups involved in wider local economic regeneration. As a result, we have retained the Membership eligibility requirement for new non-charitable applicants to submit an organisational statement on combating social exclusion.

Through our commitment to capacity-building initiatives, we have continued to attract into Associate status those local, informal cross-sector networks, to which voluntary/community groups are making a contribution and from which they are securing significant resources. This status is also available to those statutory and private (that is, non-voluntary) agencies seeking to use our services.

**MANAGEMENT** The elected LVSTC Board of Members has continued to meet bi-monthly. At the outset of the period covered by this Report, Board Members were:

Lesley Muscat	<i>Action for Blind People</i>	
Anthony Harmer	<i>ELATT</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>
Abdul Mukit	<i>Boundary Community School</i>	
Nazek Ramadan	<i>Migrant Resource Centre</i>	
Winston Castello	<i>Camden ITEC</i>	<i>Vice Chair</i>
Sona Mahtani	<i>Haringey Training Network</i>	
Helen Gore	<i>Ellingham Employment Services</i>	
Simin Azimi	<i>Refugee Womens Association</i>	<i>Chair</i>
Mike Webster	<i>Co-opted</i>	

**STAFFING** In the year to March 2009, we suffered major reductions in staffing as a result of expiring funds, at the end of 2008, from Big Lottery (plus linked ESF) and from the ESF-match-funding arrangements with our Transitional Funding from London Councils. Over the period, our staff complement was reduced from 13 to six.

With the diminishing numbers, we tended to work more as one team under one consolidated ESF Technical Assistance Programme:

Ray Phillips	<i>Director</i>	
Bill Burke	<i>Finance Officer</i>	
Ingrid Babcock	<i>ICT Co-ordinator</i>	
Humera Gondal	<i>Information and Publicity Officer</i>	<i>Left December 2008</i>
Geoff Robinson	<i>Communications Senior Adviser</i>	
Ian Foster	<i>Outreach Adviser</i>	
Stewart Goldring	<i>Deputy Director</i>	<i>Left December 2008</i>
Misbah Javed	<i>Senior Adviser</i>	<i>Left January 2009</i>
Kwasi Ofei	<i>Senior Adviser</i>	<i>Left July 2009</i>
Jacqueline Black	<i>IT Adviser</i>	<i>Left December 2008</i>
Steve White	<i>Senior Adviser</i>	
Angela Heap	<i>Regeneration Senior Adviser</i>	<i>Left December 2008</i>
Wayne Deane	<i>ESF Adviser</i>	<i>Left December 2008</i>

“The commissioning process will ask interested organisations to demonstrate their knowledge of the London labour market and London’s diverse communities, London’s voluntary and community sector and the wider social/local regeneration agenda. Applications will be assessed against evidence of past partnership working, as well as existing reach or engagement with diverse community or grass root organisations”

LONDON EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND REGIONAL FRAMEWORK  
January 2007–December 2010, Mayor of London, 2007

## Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2009

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2009 £	Total 2008 £
<b>Incoming resources</b>				
<i>Incoming resources from generated funds:</i>				
Voluntary income:	18,978	621,906	640,884	707,765
Other incoming resources	89,683	–	89,683	47,489
<b>Resources expended</b>				
<i>Charitable activities</i>				
Advice, information and training	50,339	418,911	469,250	522,215
Policy and networking	17,844	93,091	110,935	98,674
Educational and publicity	8,921	46,546	55,467	42,188
Governance costs	6,705	79,129	85,834	102,575
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<u>83,809</u>	<u>637,677</u>	<u>721,486</u>	<u>765,652</u>
<b>Net income/(outgoing) resources</b>	24,852	(15,771)	9,081	(10,398)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward	(8,690)	40,955	32,265	42,663
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<u>16,162</u>	<u>25,184</u>	<u>41,346</u>	<u>32,265</u>

### TRUSTEES' REPORT

The Trustees confirm that these summarised financial statements are a summary of information from the full unqualified accounts which were approved by the Trustees on 11 August 2009. A copy of the full accounts of the charity, upon which the auditors have reported without qualification, will be delivered to the Charity Commission. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of London Voluntary Sector Training Consortium.

Further information and the financial statements are available from London Voluntary Sector Training Consortium, Bromley Hall, 43 Gillender Street, London E14 6RN, Telephone: 0845 262 2006.

**Balance Sheet  
as at 31 March 2009**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2009 Total Funds £	2008 Total Funds £
<b>Fixed assets</b>				
Tangible assets	24,403	–	24,403	28,453
<b>Current assets</b>				
Debtors	26,321	–	26,321	27,240
Prepayments and accrued income	15,001	73,515	88,516	45,993
Cash in hand	41	–	41	41
	<u>41,363</u>	<u>73,515</u>	<u>114,878</u>	<u>73,274</u>
<b>Creditors</b>				
Amounts falling due within one year	(49,604)	(48,331)	(97,935)	(69,462)
<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>	<u>(8,241)</u>	<u>25,184</u>	<u>16,943</u>	<u>3,812</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<u>16,162</u>	<u>25,184</u>	<u>41,346</u>	<u>32,265</u>
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>16,162</u>	<u>25,184</u>	<u>41,346</u>	<u>32,265</u>
<b>Funds</b>				
Unrestricted funds			16,162	(8,690)
Restricted funds			25,184	40,955
<b>Total funds</b>			<u>41,346</u>	<u>32,265</u>

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' STATEMENT**

We have examined the summarised financial statements of the charity.

**Respective Responsibilities of trustees and auditors**

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised financial statements in accordance with the recommendations of the charity SORP. Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements with the full financial statements and the Trustees' Report. We also read the other information included in the summarised annual report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summarised financial statement.

**Basis of opinion**

We conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 1999/6 'The auditors' statement on the summary financial statement' issued by the Auditing Practices Board for use in the United Kingdom. Our report on the company's full annual financial statements describes the basis of our audit opinion on these financial statements.

**Opinion**

In our opinion the summarised financial statement is consistent with the full financial statements and the Trustees' Report of London Voluntary Sector Training Consortium for the year ended 31 March 2009.

Raffingers Stuart, Chartered Certified Accountants, Registered Auditors, 19/20 Bourne Court, Southend Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 8HD  
Dated: 11 August 2009

# FUNDING

Over the period, LVSTC has been supported from a number of sources to continue and, in some cases complete, project activity:

- **London Councils**  
*(transitional funding to July 2009)*  
to underpin the Strategic and Technical Support Services of all LVSTC Staff Teams in promoting (pre-)vocational training and economic regeneration by voluntary and community groups under the European Structural Funds.
- **ESF/ERDF Technical Assistance via GOL**  
*(to June 2008)*  
to enhance LVSTC support for voluntary/community organisations seeking to exploit the European Structural Funds in London.
- **City Bridge Trust**  
*(to December 2010)*  
to help LVSTC establish the Small Groups Economic Inclusion Project (SGEIP), as an integral part of the ESF Technical Assistance Programme, to develop the achievements of SKEIN.
- **Big Lottery Fund**  
*(to December 2008)*  
to support LVSTC in developing the Community Economic Enhancement Project for smaller voluntary/community sector providers as an integral part of the ESF Technical Assistance programme.
- **City Parochial Foundation**  
*(to June 2010)*  
to establish an Evaluation, Learning and Mentoring Project (ELM) to support small voluntary and community sector projects led by, or working with, people with disabilities or health conditions.

We are extremely grateful for the support that the above funders have committed to LVSTC.

“...an equitable skills and employment strategy for London is fundamentally about tackling poverty as much as about creating wealth.”

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE LABOUR MARKET | LVSTC 2009

# LVSTC MEMBERS

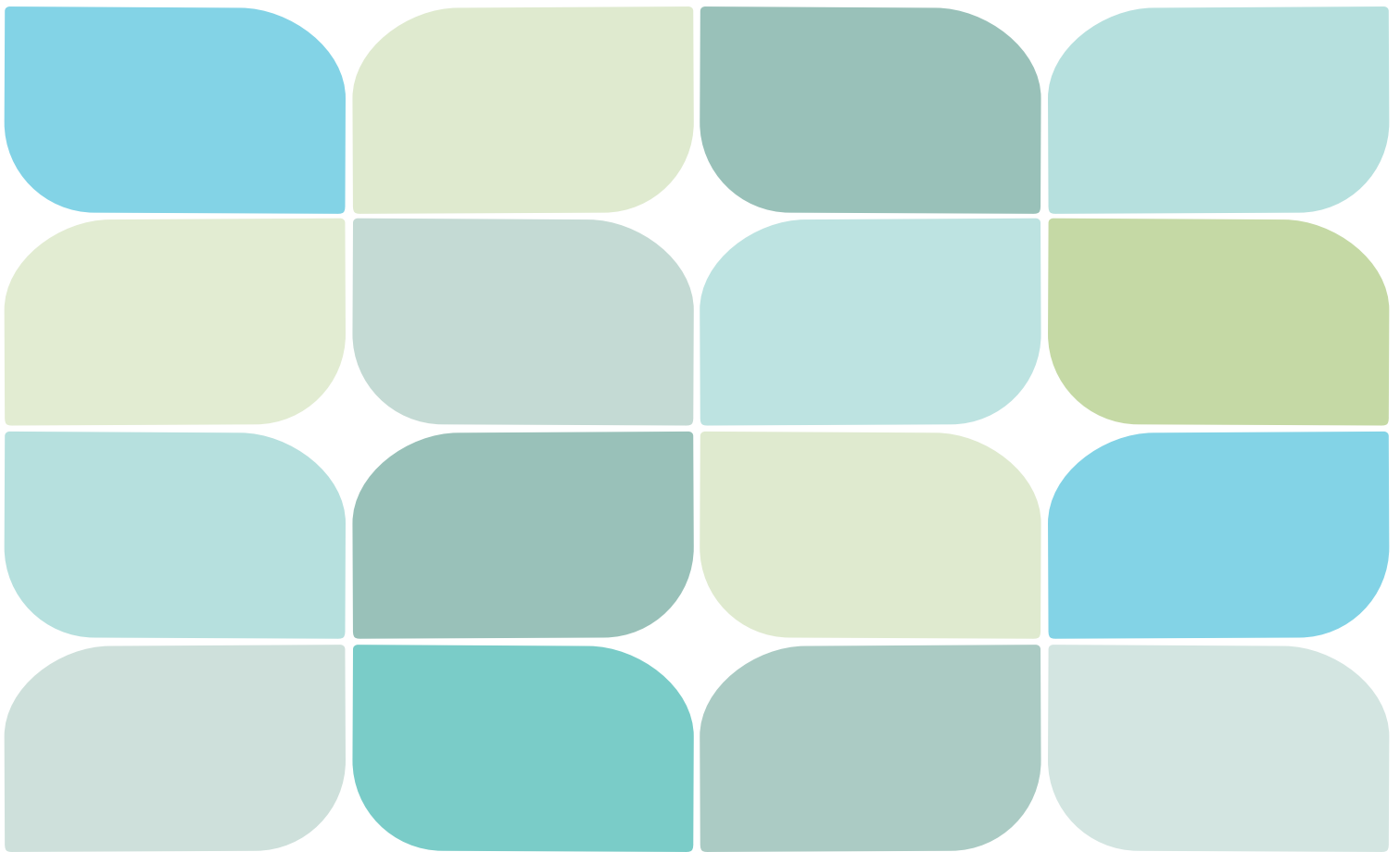
198 Gallery	Four Corners	Renewal Programme
A Brighter Future CIC Ltd	Free Form Arts Trust	Royal London Society for the Blind (RLSB)
Account 3	Greenwich Community Law Centre	SCOPE
Action Acton	Greenwich Co-operative Development Agency	Selby Trust
Action for Blind People	Hackney Community Transport	Skilltrain Limited
Africa Development Network	Harrow Association of Disabled People	Society of Afghan Residents in the UK
Africa Reunion	House of Refuge Christian Centre	Southwark Refugee Project Ltd
Africa Smile	Hoxton Trust	Southwark Sierra Leone Multicultural Organisation (SSLMCO)
African Caribbean Leadership Council	Imece Turkish Women's Group	SOVA
Arachne Greek Cypriot Women's Group	Kingston Volunteer Centre	Spare Tyre Theatre Company
Asian Action Group	Law Centres Federation	Spitalfields City Farm
Asian Women Lone Parents Association	LEAP Confronting Conflict	Stifford TJRS-TRA Community Centre
Association of Community Based Business Advice (ACBBA)	Lewisham Francophone Asylum/Refugee Centre (LFARC)	Talukdar and Nailat Community Welfare Project Limited
Barnabas Workshops	Local Employment Access Projects (LEAP)	Tamil Relief Centre
Big Issue Foundation	London Lishi Arts	The Baytree Centre
Black & Ethnic Minority Diabetes Association (BEMDA)	L'Ouverture Trust Limited	The Camden Society
Boundary Community School	Merton CAB	The Connection At St Martin's (CSTM)
Bromley By Bow Centre	Migrant and Refugee Communities Forum	The Green Corridor
Cabinda Community Association	Migrant Training	The Guinness Trust
Camden ITEC	Migrants Resource Centre	Tomorrow's People Trust
Camden Jobtrain	Nacro NCT Lambeth	Trinity Homeless Projects
Cardinal Hume Centre	New Step	UnLtd (Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs)
Caris Haringey	Newham Asian Women's Project	Vista Training
Cham Associates CIC	North Downham Training Project	Vital Education Enterprise and Training Ltd
Chats Palace Arts Centre & Venue	North London Enterprise Club	Waltham Forest BME Alliance
Clean Break	North London ITEC	Waltham Forest Disability Resource Centre
Connections Communications Centre	Off the Streets and into Work (OSW)	Walworth Garden Farm
Core Arts	Organisation of Blind African Caribbeans (OBAC)	Westminster Advocacy Service for Senior Residents
Disability Hackney	Peabody Trust	Westminster Befriend a Family
East London Advanced Technology Training (ELATT)	Pecan Ltd	Wise Owls Employment Agency Ltd
EduTec Training Centre	Peter Bedford Housing Association	Woodland Centre Trust – Beckton Activities Centre
Ellingham Employment Services	Photofusion	Young Peoples Project
Enfield Women's Centre	Preset Charitable Trust	
Fairbridge in London	Red Kite Learning	
Film & Television Freelance Training (FT2)	Refugee Women's Association	

“Technical Assistance will also be available to third sector networks to support participation by voluntary and community organisations in the programme.”



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