

The Edith M Ellis 1985 Charitable Trust

Aid Box Community

#MQRTFGM49D submitted on 8 March 2023

1.1 Please summarise what you are seeking from us

We are seeking a £5000 grant towards Aid Box Community's Hub project that offers support, supplies and sanctuary for refugees and asylum seekers. Open Monday to Friday, the Hub houses our Free Shop, run by staff and volunteers who welcome and register our service users, provide help with choosing free clothing and homeware items, offer emotional support and welfare assistance, let people know about our activity groups, and signpost to relevant agencies for other issues.

1.2 Tell us more about your project, the impact it will have on those it aims to help, and why you consider the proposed approach to be innovative

Aid Box Community (ABC) began in 2015 as a grassroots group of volunteers committed to delivering aid to the refugee camps in Northern France, and was then known as Aid Box Convoy. In 2017, our focus turned to supporting displaced people living in Bristol, and the charity was renamed and formalised as Aid Box Community. Whilst other organisations offer support including legal advice, housing, education and food, ABC identified another need - a place where service users not only receive practical support in the form of essential daily items, but also a listening ear, a place to be safe, that feels like home, where they feel welcome, valued and connected.

ABC's Hub and Free Shop provides this welcoming environment, where people can come and choose the items they need for themselves and their family, have a hot drink and talk to staff and volunteers. The Free Shop is a unique offering in Bristol, and one of the most important aspects of it is to give people choice – to help restore dignity and empower them to reflect their sense of identity through the clothing, shoes and other items they choose.

Our Hub project is designed around the following outcomes for our service users: having more access to basic everyday items, improved mental and physical wellbeing, reduced isolation and loneliness, and an improved sense of belonging within the local community.

Open Monday to Friday, 11am – 3pm, service users can visit ABC without an appointment or referral. Many service users are referred, with 45 other local organisations referring to us. As the cost of transport would otherwise be a barrier to visiting, we provide service users with bus codes to make it possible for them to get to the Hub.

Displaced people within the asylum system face many challenges, waiting years before being granted asylum. Being new to the city with potential language barriers, cultural differences and trauma related illness, can mean social isolation, spending long periods of time alone, increasingly poor physical and mental health, and the loss of self-worth and dignity. The asylum seeker allowance is currently £45 per week. For those in hotels, the weekly allowance is £8 per week. When service users come to ABC, they are in need of basic everyday items including clothing, shoes, bedding, kitchen items, toiletries and sanitary products. Living in cramped conditions, often without family or friends nearby, service users who come to us are lacking connection, a sense of belonging, and emotional support. ABC welcomes them, helps to meet their basic needs and shows them that there is a family and caring community here for them in this new place.

We also offer service user volunteering opportunities as part of the Hub project to further encourage integration within the local community and offer practical experience toward seeking employment. Our

service user volunteers have translated our written signposting guide and other resources into different languages including Farsi, Arabic, Kurdish and Bengali, and they are able to translate for service users with limited English.

ABC's work is designed to bring about change on two levels. For individual service users, we work to meet their basic humanitarian needs and increase their sense of belonging, from which their mental and physical wellbeing can improve, enabling them to move on positively with their lives and be resourced to go on to study, volunteer or work, participate in meaningful activities and fulfil their potential. At the wider community level, our work is important in promoting better understanding of cultural differences, celebrating the diversity of skills and faith in our community, and contributing to a more tolerant, welcoming society.

1.3 Which grant-giving categories does your project fulfil?

E - Work with forced migrants, including internally displaced people

1.3e Work with forced migrants, including internally displaced people

ABC's services are specifically designed for and requested by refugees and asylum seekers. Our service users originate from 46 countries; 50.6% are asylum seekers, 15.5% are refused asylum seekers and 33.9% have secured refugee status. Referred to by 45 other agencies across the city and region, ABC is recognised as one of the key local charities in the sector.

1.4 Which country is the project based in?

United Kingdom (GB)

1.5 Will the project continue after initial funding has ended?

Yes

1.5b Please give details of how you plan to continue after initial funding has ended

In order to maintain a sustainable income beyond the life of the grants we have at any time, we continue to place importance on seeking funding from multiple sources, including various Trusts and Foundations, fundraising events, individual and regular giving, and corporate support. We have huge support from the local community, and receive a constant flow of donations of items for the Free Shop as well as funds from supporter-led fundraising events.

1.6 How will the project be monitored and evaluated?

We register all service users on our database along with how many children they are visiting with, and record their attendance at every visit. This gives an accurate record of how many people we are supporting and over what period of time. We conduct a service user survey every 6 months, compile case studies, record staff observations, and we have a suggestion box in the Hub encouraging people to leave feedback in their own language.

2.1 Expenditure

EXPENDITURE ITEM	AMOUNT	NOTES
Salaries	£52,819	5 part time staff
Rent, insurance, annual service charge	£21,100	
Essential Aid Fund	£18,000	Pays for toiletries, nappies, underwear, anything we need to buy new for our service users, rather than giving out used items.
Bus fares	£2,860	10 bus fares per week for service user volunteers, sent as bus codes via WhatsApp to enable them to get to the Hub (50 weeks per year)

Utilities	£4,100	
Overheads	£4,300	Cleaning, refreshments, stationery, chairs, repair, maintenance
TOTALS	£103,179	

2.2 Income

INCOME SOURCE	TARGET AMOUNT	AMOUNT RAISED	NOTES
Grants and Trusts - unrestricted	£35,750	£15,510	
Grants and Trusts - restricted	£29,204	£0	
Corporate donations	£7,500	£0	
Individual gifts and community fundraising	£20,975	£0	
Fundraising events	£9,750	£0	
TOTALS	£103,179	£15,510	

2.3 What is the total amount (in £ sterling) your organisation is requesting from The Edith M Ellis Trust?

£5,000

2.4 Has your organisation made an application to The Edith M Ellis Trust before?

No

2.5 Please state your organisation's annual turnover (in £ sterling)

£331,144

2.6 Do you wish to upload your audited accounts or financial statement?

No

2.6b Upload File

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2.7 Please tell us where payment should be made if your application is successful

Aid Box Community
41673060
309897

3.1 Your name

Helen Drane

3.2 Your contact telephone number

07434964490

3.3 Your position within the organisation

Grants and Trusts Fundraiser

3.4 Your email address

helen@aidboxcommunity.co.uk

3.5 Organisation name

Aid Box Community

3.6 Please state the status of your organisation

UK charity

3.7 Please summarise what your organisation does

Aid Box Community provides support, supplies and sanctuary to refugees and asylum seekers in Bristol. We do this from our Hub and Free Shop, where displaced people can access essential aid in the form of free clothing and homeware items, along with emotional and welfare support and signposting. We also run six weekly activity groups and a Connections befriending program, all designed to reduce isolation, provide respite from hardship and foster a sense of belonging.

3.8 UK correspondence address for organisation

174b Cheltenham Road

Bristol

BS6 5RE

3.9 UK telephone number

07870645605

3.10 UK charity number (if applicable)

1172697

3.11 Year established

2017

3.12 Website (if applicable)

<https://www.aidboxcommunity.co.uk/>

3.13 Social media accounts (if applicable)

<https://www.facebook.com/AidBoxCommunity>

Twitter: @AidBoxCommunity

Instagram: @aidboxcommunity

4.1 How did you hear about The Edith M Ellis Trust?

Word of mouth