

Part A - General Information

Organisation

Beam Project CIC (registration submitted on 30 March and pending)

Organisation Type/Structure

Community Interest Company (CIC)

Theme/Nature of Project

Access to Justice / Human Rights

Name of Lead Contact

Siobhan Ballan

Email

info@beamproject.org

How did you find out about the Awards?

Google/Search Engine Search

Website

<http://beamproject.co.uk>

Social Media Handles (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram etc):

(NB: website will be improved and re-launched as beamproject.org in the coming months)

Part B - Project Proposal

Project Mission: A snapshot of the project's intention (50 words max)

Our mission is to reduce the incidence of child sexual abuse (CSA). We pursue this mission through three activities: professional training designed and delivered by people with direct experience, policy advocacy, and awareness campaigns. All our work is driven by the notion of what we think would have helped us.

Situation (250 words)

The NSPCC estimates that 1 in 20 children in the UK experience sexual abuse. The Home Office estimated that the onset or continuation of child sexual abuse in the 2018-2019 financial year amounted to a £10.1 billion cost to society, with a 'unit cost' (per child victim) of £89,240. Solutions so far have focused on 'prevention' or, more accurately, intervention (as it's extremely difficult to prevent a first incident of abuse) through training professionals to detect signs of abuse. Those who deliver training have typically achieved a qualification in a safeguarding-related topic, though there is no regulatory framework for who can deliver training or what the courses must contain.

The heart of the problem is that victims find it so hard to tell someone if they're being sexually abused. Abusers rely on instilling children with a sense of shame and personal responsibility. This is why children rely on adults to intervene, and why professional training from a direct or lived experience standpoint is so needed: children are unlikely to simply tell you! Adults need to understand why that is, and how to pre-empt and overcome those barriers in order to maximise the child's willingness to disclose. Then, once a child does feel able to tell someone about the abuse, the person they tell needs to be in a position to respond supportively and take action to make sure that the abuse is stopped.

Complication (250 words)

We run training to build professional skills in anticipating and responding to a child telling them that they're being, or have been, abused. Siobhan, the founder of Beam Project, became the youngest survivor of child sexual abuse to speak out publicly in 2008, when she shared her story on regional television at the age of 17. From 2017, Siobhan led workshops on the topic of child sexual abuse and how to help children. This work eventually led to the design and delivery of training alongside other survivors under the 'brand name' of Beam Project. Participants included health, social work, and police staff. There was immediate traction and positive feedback.

The team delivered six training events before the pandemic. During 2020, we tried to take the work online but found that webinars didn't have the stigma-busting impact of live training. Siobhan also suffered a personal loss at this time and stopped developing Beam Project. In the years since, she started a family of her own and is now ready to return to our mission with renewed confidence and direction. She has re-engaged with the original core team who are all, thankfully, keen to take the work further.

We've focused on the training offering in this application because it's a scalable service that we sell to

clients and there is some existing proof of concept. Our policy advocacy and awareness campaigns are at the idea stage.

Solution (250 words)

We are going to solve the problem by delivering survivor-led training to every region of the UK. We consider our training to be innovative because it is delivered only by people with direct experience and goes beyond telling our stories; we draw insights as abuse survivors to put professionals in the child's position and understand the barriers they face. Our training emphasises practical exercises such as having participants role-play the situation from both their and the child's perspective. We then have other participants weigh in on the interactions and host candid but supportive discussions on how the situation could be improved. The trainers also act out various scenarios between child victims and professionals that could result in a disclosure, demonstrating interactions and responses that range from very unhelpful to excellent.

We think that our training can make the difference between a child feeling able to disclose to a professional who has been trained by us, or keeping the abuse a secret for perhaps years longer. We have had verbal feedback that our training resulted in disclosures after two separate occasions (out of a total of six sessions being delivered to ~250 participants before the pandemic), but unfortunately we didn't record it! In the future, we will be sure to capture evidence of that outcome to strengthen our case for support.

Part C - Wider Support

How would the Stephen Lloyd Award network of partners' support be beneficial to your project? (250 words max)

Even though Beam Project has existed in some form since 2017, and Siobhan's activism dates back to 2008, we still consider ourselves a start-up as we didn't have the clarity and strategy that we have now - and the pandemic quickly arrested our progress. We would benefit from feedback and advice on our 3-year strategy (attached below), particularly on our budget and ensuring that we start with the proper governance and policy structures in place. With that in mind, we think one of your pro bono partners such as Bob Thust could be a good fit.

Siobhan also thinks she would benefit from regular mentoring sessions with someone who is mission-aligned and can help with future strategic decisions as we grow. John Kingston seems like a good choice given his former role as a Director of Save the Children UK and his belief in the third level of 'policy and campaigning' work that aims to create cultural change in society such that no-one thinks of throwing children into rivers' (quoting from his article in Philanthropy Impact). We work towards behavioural and cultural change so that nobody thinks of sexually abusing children; the society we want to create will become a natural deterrent.

Finally, accountancy is a 'growth area' for us. It would be very helpful to have someone, such as haysmacintyre, to help us with keeping a good relationship with Companies House and staying on top of self assessment, payroll, and other requirements.

Part D - Financial Justification

How do you propose to spend the winning funds of £25,000 (50 words max). Please provide a general idea.

£25,000 would cover all of our expenses for one year, including a 50% FTE salary for Siobhan of £8,000. The next biggest expenses, at £3000 each, are expected travel expenses and the website makeover and re-launch. The linked strategy includes a budget.

Part E - Supporting Information

Governing Documents: Where relevant, please upload any recent charity accounts and governing documents as attachments.

- [BeamProjectCICArticlesofAssociation.pdf](#)

Team: We would like to learn a little more about the individual or team invested into the project. What are your individual credentials? Is there a story behind how you or your team all came together to support the project? (75 words max)

Our current board:

Siobhan has a law degree and an MSc in safeguarding. Becoming a mother recently has strengthened Siobhan's motivation to deliver powerful live training which puts direct experience at the heart of everything we do.

Margo has been familiar with Siobhan's work since 2008, as she was the CEO of the youth charity which gave Siobhan her first opportunity to speak publicly.

David is a survivor and marketing consultant and... he's great.

Additional References: You are welcome to provide a list of up to 5 links with any relevant supporting material or visuals, as further reference

Siobhan's TV appearance for Fixers' 10-year anniversary
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ocd6TQ4gjQo>

Tedx NHS 2024 speaker nomination email (outcome TBD):
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sl7RPPqQvoapzpU9sv3adWSMpFVW_TrD/view?usp=drive_link

3-year strategic plan: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1N6-35Y-o-6PATOPTQkFtw-AXdolv14vH-_Ue4iKwpXU/edit?usp=sharing