

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2381

Title: Diversity in Volunteering Experiment

Executive Summary:

Team London, The Mayor's social action and volunteering team, have an ultimate goal to *Make volunteering open to all*. In order to do this, we want to ensure that we contribute to removing potential barriers to volunteering for all Londoners.

Research shows that there may be disparities in the levels of BAME volunteering rates. If these disparities do exist, we do not have enough information about whether it is an actual difference or just a difference in the way that BAME individuals classify or report themselves as volunteers.

In 2018 the (formerly Cabinet Office, now an independent organisation) Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) carried out research for Team London on the use of Reward and Recognition to overcome barriers to volunteering in London. Following on from this we are commissioning BIT to conduct an experiment to explore whether BAME individuals are less likely to identify with volunteering terminology used in traditional surveys which means their volunteering is under-reported or whether their propensity to volunteer is actually lower than other groups.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Team London approves:

1. Expenditure of up to £25,000 to carry out a three-armed experiment using BIT's specialist experience and methodology; and
2. A related exemption from the requirement of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code to seek competitive tenders for the services set out above.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Alice Wilcock

Position: Assistant Director of Team London

Signature:



Date:

28/10/19

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The Team London programme helps deliver the Mayor's priorities to work with communities and civil society groups across London to encourage active participation in community and civic life, supporting Londoners of all ages to volunteer and take action to improve London. Team London's ultimate goals are to: Improve the volunteering experience in London; increase the value of volunteering and make volunteering open to all.
- 1.2. The proposed experiment for which this ADD seeks expenditure approval supports objectives outlined in MD2426. It seeks to improve social mobility, particularly targeting under-represented groups - those people who have the desire to participate equally and actively in society but currently face barriers that prevent their participation.
- 1.3. In 2018 we commissioned the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT), established by the Cabinet Office, to carry out research into the use of Reward and Recognition to overcome barriers to volunteering in London. One of the barriers identified through this research was that 'the framing of volunteer opportunities doesn't match volunteer motivation.' To address this BIT recommended that the GLA could run small scale randomised control trials to determine effective messaging in order to increase applications and participation.
- 1.4. Recent research into BAME volunteering has identified that there is 'a dearth of available information for policymakers and practitioners to make informed decisions about a diverse BAME voluntary sector. The *ABC of BAME* published by JUMP in January 2019¹ highlighted the need for 'qualitative and mixed methods, and studies that can better draw out the contextual story around volunteering.'
- 1.5. The NCVO *Time Well Spent* report published January 2019, finds that 'Ethnicity has little bearing on overall propensity to volunteer.' However, it also acknowledges that there is some indication that people from BAME backgrounds might be less likely to volunteer, but low base sizes amongst BAME respondents means the data is not conclusive².
- 1.6. After an examination of other research teams/methodologies, it is apparent that the BIT is the only organisation to offer this depth of experience. The BIT was set up by the Cabinet Office to specifically provide this expertise to central government and other public bodies and as such no other organisation exists who can supply this research. This experiment directly follows on from research that BIT conducted for us last year. In particular this experiment requires use of an online platform that can accommodate different trial arms and access a large quantity of target respondents. The BIT platform, *Predictiv* is designed to run behavioural experiments. It enables governments and others to run Randomised Control Trials with an online population of participants. For this reason, we will use a Single Source Justification (SSJ) on this occasion.
- 1.7. We have consulted with both NCVO and New Philanthropy Capital on the proposed experiment to ensure that the work we are undertaking complements other current research in the sector.
- 1.8. We have worked on options for the framing of the experiment questions in July/August 2019. We would like to launch the experiment in November 2019 in order to be able to analyse and share results in January 2020 and hold a results workshop with stakeholders in February 2020.

¹ *The ABC of BAME, New, mixed method research into black, Asian and minority ethnic groups and their motivations and barriers to volunteering, January 2019:* <http://eprints.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/5601/1/The-ABC-of-BAME-Jump-Report-10.01.18-1.pdf>

² NCVO, *Time Well Spent*, January 2019: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/volunteering-policy/research/time-well-spent>

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1 This proposal concerns the delivery of a Randomised Control Trial to address the hypothesis:

- BAME individuals are less likely than non-BAME individuals to identify the time they contribute free of charge to someone who is not in their close family as volunteering, or to identify as a 'volunteer'. As such their propensity to volunteer appears lower in statistics even if it is not in reality.
- BAME individuals are in reality less likely to contribute their time free of charge to someone who is not in their close family than non-BAME individuals. As such their propensity to volunteer is lower in statistics because it is true in reality.

2.2 BIT will run a three- armed experiment on the online platform Predictiv to help Team London better identify which, if any of the above reasons are related to the perceived disparity in BAME volunteering. The experiment will address the following research questions:

- Does changing the way that volunteering is framed increase the propensity of BAME respondents who classify their existing behaviour as volunteering?
- Do the anticipated wellbeing benefits of volunteering accrue regardless of whether the individual considers their behaviour to be volunteering or not?
- Does changing the framing of volunteering increase the willingness to participate in volunteering?

2.3 The following outputs will be produced:

- **A Trial Protocol** – A document outlining the trial specifications (sample selection, randomisation, data gathering etc.) to be discussed with Team London.
- **Trial Report** – Encompassing the findings of the trial; recommendations for potential adaptations and considerations of how the recommendations can be implemented by community organisations.
- **A Sector Workshop** – When the results are finalised, BIT will host a workshop with Team London and other key stakeholders to convey the results of the trial and discuss how the results can be implemented and adapted for current practice.

2.4 The BIT are the only organisation that are endorsed by Cabinet Office to carry out this kind of behavioural insight analysis and are on a government framework to provide such services to public bodies on an exclusive basis. Due to their unique offering, we will be procuring the BIT services after completion of an SSJ with TfL's procurement team.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The public-sector equality duty requires the identification and evaluation of the likely potential impacts, both Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the "Equality Act") as public authorities, the Mayor and the GLA must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Protected characteristics under the Equality Act comprise age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage or civil partnership status. Due to the nature of this proposed decision, no particular effects, positive or negative, are foreseen on persons with a protected characteristic under the Equality Act.
- 3.2. As noted in section 1 above, the aim of the programme is to support and encourage all Londoners to be able to take part in volunteering. A key goal of this programme is to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not

share it. The programme will specifically focus on individuals from BAME communities to gain insight into how to ensure that there are no inadvertent barriers to volunteering for them in the way that volunteering is messaged and framed.

- 3.3. Equal Opportunities are enshrined within Team London's programmes. Team London volunteering programmes and projects aim to ensure that all Londoners can access volunteering opportunities. They seek to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and indeed by doing so support other Londoners equally throughout the city. The BIT work uses behavioural science and randomised control methods in order to ensure that barriers and behavioural characteristics of all groups are equally understood and can be worked through to ensure equality of access and opportunity. This experiment approach is a further element of our efforts to ensure that equalities issues are worked through and understood.
- 3.4. Our projects promote: equal life chances; the reduction of barriers to social mobility; and seek to enable and demonstrate improvements in social integration and effective community engagement. This programme will involve working with potentially under-represented and disconnected Londoners to increase our understanding of how these individuals participate, or not, in volunteering and how they identify when they do. This will enable us to better craft messages about volunteering that speak to people from diverse groups to better engage with them. Volunteering has well reported benefits to subjective wellbeing and also to sense of belonging thus supporting mayoral priorities concerning social integration and social mobility,
- 3.5. The established Advisory Board for Team London ensures we have the voice of all relevant parties shaping the future of the programme to ensure it is relevant, efficient and delivering the best volunteering related outcomes for Londoners.
- 3.6. Our work also embraces London's diversity by connecting Londoners from a variety of demographical and geographical backgrounds, including those with protected characteristics together in support of commons causes.

4. Other considerations

Risks

	Risk Description	Mitigation/ risk response
1	Contracted organisation does not meet the agreed upon programme outcomes	The risk is low and will be mitigated through close contact. The contract delivery partner is an expert in its field and is highly regarded. It has been devolved from central government to become an independent body and is still regulated by the National Audit Office.
2	Financial Mismanagement	The likelihood of over-spend or other financial misconduct is low, and will be mitigated by close budgetary management on the behalf of the GLA project manager, and payment will be dependent on results.
3	Data Protection	BIT will be bound by a confidentiality agreement with their work with us. No personal or sensitive data will be made available in a way that would contravene data protection and/or GDPR requirements

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.1 Team London's work on recognition and motivation of volunteering will work with communities and civil society groups across London to encourage active participation in community and civic life for all Londoners. This links to Mayoral priorities on social integration, social mobility and community

engagement. We will ensure that any cross- policy relevant finding as shared with the appropriate teams.

Impact Assessments and consultations

- 4.2 We consult relevant groups and stakeholders when undertaking any new programmes. We held an event with 50 Stakeholders in January 2019 to identify where Team London could best support a strong volunteering landscape in London and work on making volunteering open to all was identified as a priority. We have scoped out existing research on diversity in volunteering and have discussed with key stakeholders, National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) amongst others how the proposed experiment could complement and add to existing research.
- 4.3 There is an established Advisory Board for Team London to ensure we have the voice of all relevant parties shaping the future of the programme to ensure it is relevant, efficient and delivering the best volunteering related outcomes for Londoners.
- 4.4 There are no conflicts of interest to declare for any officers involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is being sought for expenditure up to £25,000 to fund the design, development and delivery of a randomised control trial and subsequent analysis of results, production of trial report and sharing of learning.
- 5.2. This expenditure will be funded from the 2019-20 Reward and Recognition programme budget within the Team London and Sports unit.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Development of RCT questions	July/August 2019
Set up of trial	October/November 2019
Trial launch	November 2019
Analysis of results and report produced	January 2020
Delivery of sector workshop to discuss findings	February 2020

Appendices and supporting papers:

None.

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

Part 2 - Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form - NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to
confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Truly Johnston has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 21 October 2019.

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature



Date

23-10-19