



## Reaching Communities funding bid

### Afrocats



We're an award-winning charity that supports people who face social exclusion in Greater Manchester. We work closely with the communities and people that access our projects to create inspiring experiences and opportunities. Together, we address and dismantle inequality by identifying and breaking down barriers.

Our vision is a robust and more inclusive social environment for vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees.

Our mission is to build agency, aspiration and opportunity for mainly female adults and young people aged 6-18 to improve their overall life chances through creative engagement.

We had initially put in a proposal for a Reaching Communities bid and were advised by The National Lottery Fund to contact Macc to look at the organisational aspect of Afrocats. Macc looked at our initial application and feedback and offered us bespoke support to help us to shape and strengthen our funding application.

We are able to run thanks to intermittent funding and volunteering; the consultancy support from Macc helped me divide this into two separate aspects of the organisation. This then gave me time to review and write an application. With the Macc consultant's support, we were able to break down tasks into deadlines, and even though we had a fixed amount of time, Macc extended this so we could finish the application. Together we wrote a draft application, which we submitted to Reaching Communities. From their feedback, the consultant helped me understand how best to improve the final draft, which means I can now write stronger applications for future bids.

**I felt really supported from Macc throughout – I never felt like I was on my own. I would say to anyone working with Macc, you'll be supported so well but you need to put in the work too!**



**The support and core funding has made a huge difference in developing our capacity for support and improved our track record. Even more so, it's given our supporters and service users a sense of pride and inspired the women and young people that there is a future beyond immigration difficulties.** We can now work with first, second and third generations, which we didn't have funds or capacity for before as well as a chance to work with other organisations including Manchester City of Sanctuary, Whitworth Art Gallery, Community Arts Northwest, Z-Arts, Safety for Sisters, and WAST. It's been the icing on the cake that we are going to be working alongside these amazing organisations and do more for social justice.

**This was one of the best experiences in shaping me as a person and as a leader of an organisation.** Even though I had written a 3-year business plan, it was a beautiful refresher to talk this through with someone, which has now helped shape the future of our group.



March 2022