

Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual &
Trans Young People in Ireland



Future Direction of the Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO)

A submission by BeLong To Youth Services

Introduction

BeLonG To Youth Services is the national organisation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex young people. Since 2003, we have worked with LGBTI+ young people, between 14 and 23 years, to create a world where they are equal, safe, and valued in the diversity of their identities and experiences. We also advocate and campaign on behalf of young LGBTI+ people and offer a specialised LGBTI+ youth service with a focus on mental and sexual health, alongside drug and alcohol support. We respond to the needs of LGBTI+ young people in Ireland and we help them thrive.

BeLonG To is a current beneficiary of the Scheme to Support National Organisations.

Core multi-annual funding

Within the Irish philanthropic landscape opportunities for both core, and multi-annual funding commitments are few and far between. The lack of core and multi-annual funding can have significant detrimental impact on the strategic and operational development of organisations.

SSNO funding has allowed our organisation to make strategic investments in growing the capacity of our team. Firstly, we brought a Communications Officer on board to strengthen our work overall. Secondly, we made a strategic investment in fundraising yielding a 120% growth in unrestricted income in 2017. We also invested in a Volunteer Coordinator to improve the quality and enhance the capacity of our frontline services.

These investments would not have been possible without the security offered by the core and multi-annual nature of the funds.

Indirect Costs

A worrying trend across funding to NGO's is the implementation of indirect cost caps as a percentage of direct costs. These caps are counterproductive especially at a time when indirect costs across the sector are growing due to increased regulation and compliance costs.

Funders must be cognisant that projects cannot run without the infrastructure provided by indirect program costs. Best practice under the Charities SORP and FRS 102 is that organisations have an apportionment policy in place that shares these indirect costs based on a clearly identified formula e.g. staff assigned to programs, floor space occupied etc.

The use of indirect cost caps distorts these best practices and could potentially place charities in breach of the SORP if adopted by the Regulator as minimum standards later this year.

Administration of the Scheme

Pobal are to be commended on their high quality of process of engagement and consultation with grantees and of the handbooks produced for the administration of the scheme.

Their staff are both knowledgeable and helpful to grantees in relation to queries as and when they arise. In any future iteration of the scheme the quality of the administrative supports should be considered of paramount importance to the quality of experience and the administrative burden placed on funded organisations through its administration.

BeLonG To would be happy to provide an in-person briefing to Mr. O'Callaghan as part of its review of the Future Direction of the Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO)

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