



Dear Members and the Somali Community,

I am pleased to share with you that as result of the work and ideas generated from CSOs Working Groups over the last few months we got a national grant from the National Lottery Community Fund for delivery of multifacet resilience capacity building program for Somali led CVO's composed of the following:

- Funding to Hire Bid Writers,
- Mental Health training
- Benefits & Money Debt advice training,
- Creation of the first UK Wide Somali Community Hub Website and
- Needs Assessment of Somali-led Mosques.

These programs will commence from 1st September 2020 until end of February 2021. This funding will deal with issues arising from Covid-19 and building resilience in our member organisations to deal with issues such as the predicted recession related issues such as access to benefits, debt advice and mental health awareness. It is all for the benefit of the Somali Community in the UK.

[CSO is recruiting for 4 new posts in support of this work please visit our website this week for details.](#)

1. Funding for Bid Writers:

We will be offering a free package of support for all our members, on a first come a first served basis, to assist with accessing funds by supporting and mentoring funding applications through a pool of bid writers.

The funding will cover 135 days of support in bid writing and dealing with budgeting/cash flows to document the impact of Covid-19 on organisations. We will be hiring a pool of bid writers in relation to the first aspect and also making available the services of an accounting firm to assist with the second aspect.

Each organisation must make individual requests on the Pro forma Work Plan and also the Pro Forma Financial Form which can be downloaded from our website following the links.

Every organisation has initial allocation of 3 days of support (2 days bid writing and one day financial information support). There will be a Cab-Rank rule in place. We will also place a limitation on the allocation on a geographical basis of 50% to London based organisations and 50% to those in the regions.

The Funding for Bid Writers page with its two downloadable files can be found at:

<https://www.councilofsomaliorgs.com/content/funding-bid-writers>

We will also continue to update members on new funding opportunities. The Fundraising page can be found on:

<https://www.councilofsomaliorgs.com/content/fundraising>

2. Capacity Building in Resilience: Benefits, Money & Debt Advice and Mental Health Awareness:

We will be offering the following by Zoom online:

- **Training in Benefits Advice** by the Benefits Training Company, will result in advice sector recognised certificate in the following four areas:

- **Introduction to Welfare Benefits** - this course teaches the main principles which underpin the wider benefits system and provides a foundation. There is a focus on recognising entitlement across the whole benefits system and maximising income for people in the community.
- **Universal Credit Overview** - we consider who should claim UC, how the rollout of UC affects the wider system, how amounts are calculated, the claims process and work requirements in UC.
- **Personal Independence Payment** - this course focuses on making successful applications, particularly the disability criteria and how to fill out the application form effectively.
- **Benefits for EEA nationals** - we look at the various tests which affect European nationals focussing mostly on the Habitual Residence Test and the Right to Reside requirement.

Each course is split into four parts or modules which together make up the equivalent of a one day course. The delivery will be over 8 consequent days of ½ days. Each 1/2 course will consist of two modules of 2.5 hours each.

This training will permit organisations to have the qualified staff and volunteers in order to become formally an advice centre on benefits.

- **Training in Money & Debt Advice** which will result in Certificate which is accredited by the Advice UK and recognised by the Money & Pensions Service & FCA.

The training will involve pre-course reading, a live online 2 hour Zoom session with the tutor, homework such as case studies and exercises then a final 2 hour live online session about 5 working days after the first live online session.

All organisations offering money and debt advice have to individually apply to the FCA for a licence to practice once the staff have completed the accredited training. They can thereafter access specialist debt advice training through the Money Advice Trust.

- **Training in Mental Health Awareness** by the Women's Inclusive Team, will result in a Certificate of Attendance.

This course will allow participants to recognise the symptoms of mental health issues and provide initial help, signposting and guide a person towards appropriate professional help. This course is for ½ day over 2.5 hours.

Who can participate in the Training?

Organisations- We are offering this training to CSO Member organisations in the UK. There are 30 organisation places on offer. We will also place a limitation on the allocation on a geographical basis of 50% to London based organisations and 50% to those in the regions. We will offer on a first come first served basis.

Individuals- We are offering 300 training places for employees of CSO Member organisations and their volunteers. This offer is also open to Somali graduates who are unemployed and looking for job opportunities in the advice sector. If it is possible we will link volunteers for work experience within our CSO Member organisations if organisations indicate willingness to offer places.

Duration of Offer:

The training will be offered in 15 cohorts of 20 participants and will run from mid September 2020 to end of February 2021. We will notify participants close to the date of the scheduling of each cohort and you will be expected to continue with the training within the allocated cohort time table. We will try to accommodate choices where we can but the dates will be fixed well ahead of time in order to permit a wide selection of options.

Conditions of the Offer:

It is mandatory that each person who signs up for the training programme to complete all the training for the certificates to be issued.

Incentive for Participants/Organisations:

CSO is offering a daily rate £15 for each participant who completes all the training. Each participant must also complete any course work required as part of the training. Payment will only be made once the training provider certifies that the participant has completed all training and confirmation is received of completed training from all the providers. Pro rata payment will be made for part participation only if 90% completion rate is achieved.

Additional Incentive Organisations:

CSO will be offering each organisation that signs up for the training with a minimum of 5 staff and/or volunteers 2 tablets with headsets valued at £550. Organisations will keep these equipment for future training opportunities and use them for their work also. *This offer is not open to individual participants.*

Registration Process:

Organisations and volunteers would need to register their details on CSO's website www.councilofsomaliorgs.com following the link.

For individuals we would ask your consent to keep your details beyond the training in order for CSO to continue to inform you of further opportunities. Please follow the Link for Individual registration. We would require your name, address and telephone (mobile) and email address.

You can find the training page:

<https://www.councilofsomaliorgs.com/training>

And its two forms:

<https://www.councilofsomaliorgs.com/content/organisation-training-form>

<https://www.councilofsomaliorgs.com/content/individual-training-form>

3. Creation of the first UK Wide Somali Community Hub Website:

We will also be commissioning the first ever UK Somali Community Hub website, which CSO's members can access for free, subject to moderation, in order to;

- showcasing their work and services,
- provide information relating to their areas,
- advertise job and volunteer opportunities,
- Sharing ideas on projects and best practice,
- Educating the Somali Community
- upload their videos of their work (subject to them fitting in the thematics of CSO's work on Education, Health & WellBeing, Employment and Criminal Justice System.

The content to be copyright free for use of the Somali Community and be in accordance with the law of the land. Moderation will be at the sole discretion of CSO.

4. Needs Assessment of Somali-led Mosques:

CSO is also funded by the National Lottery Community Fund to do a Needs Assessment.

CSO and many Somali community leaders are concerned that the Somali led mosques are not able to access guidance and support during this period. We wish to reach out to these mosques and understand their needs in this critical period.

We would like members of the Somali community and CSO Members to inform us of the details and contacts of the Mosques which are Somali-led.

Please visit our website to provide us the information so that we can reach out to our mosques.

The Mosques registration online form can be found at:

<https://www.councilofsomaliorgs.com/content/somali-led-mosques>

Finally, we ask all our members and the community to join CSO in making a success of this massive program of capacity building which will benefit our community in response to the impact of Covid-19.