

Organisation Name		Reference code	
Milk Honey Bees		2025-10-YWG20	
Organisation Address			
International House London SW9 7QE England			
Website Address			
www.milkhoneybees.co.uk			
How did you hear about the Triangle Trust?			
Grant Manager			
Please describe your organisation's purpose in one or two sentences.			
To support Black Girls aged 10-25 to put H.E.R (Healing Empowerment and Reseience) First through theraputic and creative expression to support their healing and development.			
Type of organisation? (tick all that apply and complete relevant details)			
Charity	Registered Charity Number	Date Registered	
No			
Community Interest Company	Registered Companies House Number	Date Registered	
Yes	14786859	2023	
Social Enterprise	Has your organisation been awarded the Social Enterprise Mark?	Year Awarded	
No			
Grant Summary			
Milk Honey Bees - MzUnderstood - expanding upon a programme celebrating Black girl joy and change agency; an antidote in a context where disproportionality, exploitation, marginalisation, exclusion and adultification resides.			
Please describe the specific needs of the young women and girls you work with that this project will address			
<p>Established in 2017, Brixton-based Milk Honey Bees creates much-needed safe and empowering spaces where Black girls can flourish and be embraced as creative, powerful change makers, in celebration of Black girl joy. We work specifically, exclusively and unapologetically with Black and Mixed girls and young women, who are navigating multiple disadvantage in areas of high deprivation and contextual risk, within a society that problematises them. An aspect of the risk our girls face relates to their invisibility, yet also hypervisibility in society, the adultification and othering of them by the system and society and in how their voices are unheard and/or marginalised. We recognise racism as an adverse childhood (and adult) experience (ACE) and intend to counter the impact of this upon Black girls, recognising that for the most part, adverse experiences often go unnoticed and the associated trauma unacknowledged. Black young women and girls are often deemed as hard to engage, yet what they need is a safe space to express creatively and the chance to feel supported and access opportunities, as well as gain skills to navigate in society. Oftentimes, through a legacy of trauma, re: social injustice, racism and disproportionality, our girls may be tentative to engage with services, even with the presence of multiple and complex needs. These needs are often intersectional, such as low self-esteem, low confidence, poor</p>			

self-worth, negative body image, alongside poverty, disadvantage, exposure to domestic and community violence, abuse, vulnerability to exploitation, including sexual and criminal, disproportionality in health, education and other services, etc.

Our girls experience exclusion and discrimination, leaving them with a sense of lack of Belonging, which further exacerbates their needs. As Black girls, misogynoir is unfortunately an inherent feature within their maturation from girls to young women, as they navigate double discrimination and systemic barriers to exploring, let alone fulfilling their potential. This significantly compromises a positive identity, which in turn impacts self-belief in positive choice-making, where emotional dysregulation and hypervigilance are normalised.

There is a lack of holistic and therapeutic spaces for Black girls to just 'BE', without the labels they have to tolerate in broader society, magnifying the impact of being excluded and further pushing Black girls to the margins. The ongoing inequity related to Black girls and young women, means that rather than being broken, cycles of deprivation are affirmed and embedded, perpetuating the already multiple and layered risk factors that our girls are forced to navigate.

Much of the attention related to race, trauma and impact of street and other violence, is centred upon boys and especially Black boys, even though girls and young women face intersecting challenges related to race, culture, ethnicity, gender, sex and a range of adverse childhood experiences. Our girls also face systemic barriers, such as exclusion from education, mental health struggles and the harmful effects of Adulthood on their safety and protection.

What are the key outcomes you will be seeking to achieve for young women and girls either at risk of offending or who are already caught up in the criminal justice system? How will you track the impact you are making?

Key outcomes relate to reducing first time entry and risk of entry into CJS. Also building resilience from within, by creating spaces of psychological and physical safety, by providing therapeutic mentoring, by nurturing creativity and agency within Black girls and young women. Focus upon healing means that our girls and young women are able to positively respond to some of the issues they encounter in their community and broader society, by learning to use their voice, being able to speak up for themselves and also assert themselves, not as passive recipients of services but as changemakers in their own right.

At Milk Honey Bees, we recognise that because our girls and young women face multiplicity and intersectional challenges, there is no one size fits all and the route into the criminal justice system often begins with adverse childhood experiences.

Additionally, as many of the needs that arise from these challenges are deep-rooted and sometimes even generational, our approach is to focus on building sustainability, rather than short-term interventions that may secure short-term outcomes but are not empowering in the long term.

In summary, key outcomes include:

Risk awareness

Breaking cycles and legacies of trauma, including toxic relationships and behaviour patterns, including recognising red flags

Improved understanding of risk and how to make disclosures

Improved understanding of signs and risks of adulthood and criminalisation

Better decision-making, related to consent and recognising coercion

Healing from individual and social trauma

Being and feeling empowered, seen and heard, that their voice matters

Inner resources to manage change and improve relationships at school, college, in the community, at home and with peers

Calmer nervous system and emotional self-regulation

Friendship groups, togetherness and trust-building

Improved sense of community, including with police/school/authority

Transferable skills for life confidence, stress-management, time-management better

decision-making, self-leadership, raised self-esteem and self-worth
CV enhancing experiences and achievements, including improved communication skills and opportunities to train as peer mentors

Joy through creativity

Processing lived experiences and better able to respond to challenging situations

Reduced rate/desistance in reoffending

Diversion from embedded experience of the criminal justice system

We track outcomes by taking a distance-travelled approach, utilising baseline, interim and end surveys, weekly check-ins, journal entries, case studies and outcome and progress-based reporting. Our evaluations show that we have reduced first time entry and risk from CJS by 90%. We also have seen that 100% fed back that being supported by MHB also supported them in other areas such as education. We seek feedback from key stakeholders, such as teachers, youth justice workers, etc which supports service design and knowledge exchanges.

What are the key activities you will undertake with this funding to achieve these outcomes?

mes?

Our proposed service model for this funding relates explicitly to our MzUnderstood therapeutic mentoring programme, fundamentally serving as a prevention approach, although we have engaged girls and young women who are already engaged with the justice system.

MzUnderstood is our response to a much-needed regular/trusted/dedicated space for Black girls to explore the negative issues facing them; exclusion, violence, adultification, lack of safety, criminalisation, fear, unfair treatment, stigmatisation and racism. This early intervention programme addresses the fact that many Black girls are fearful, do not feel protected and mistrust adults. If not supported and addressed, this can lead to lifelong issues in personal relationships and in community/society.

The programme addresses the early risk factors specific to Black girls and young women.

MzUnderstood is a 8 week, group and 1:1 preventative, community-based initiative based on our experience/evidence, designed to target/address issues faced by Black girls and young women, with the aim of reducing risk factors that can lead to them being vulnerable to criminal exploitation and/or becoming embroiled in the criminal justice system. The content and delivery model is informed by our study and from our HERSpace individual/group therapeutic mentoring programmes.

With 12 girls per group, running for 2 hours per week (plus preparation and debrief), across six cohorts of 8-week programmes per year, covering themes including risky behaviour, Identity and Intersectionality; Adultification and Criminalization; violence, safety, substance misuse, healthy relationships/choices; Black Girl Healing, Safekeeping and Liberation; Healthy relationships, ability to make better decisions around identity, sexism, racism, misogyny, violence, etc.

Sessions will run in accessible community spaces across London, building on our work in South East London.

As we facilitate a range of programmes, there will be variable pathways into and also beyond MzUnderstood, meaning that Black girls and young women will be coherently supported in a person-centred way, with warm handovers, a sense of community and the opportunity to track longer-term progress and outcomes.

In summary, key activities include:

Therapeutic Mentoring

Partnership meetings

Co-creation and co-production workshops

Collaboration building, to enable the extension of the programme, into other areas

Staff training and development

Stakeholder engagement, evaluation and analysis

We will leverage our pre-existing relationships with schools, colleges, pupil referral units, social services, health, youth justice, community groups and charitable

organisations and our ongoing engagement with Black girls and young women, in South East London and Pan-London, to ensure awareness of and engagement with our MzUnderstood programme.

Does your proposed project already exist or is this a new piece of work? If this project is already operating, please describe to us how you will use this as an opportunity to build on what you have achieved to date. If this is a new piece of work, please explain what this funding will enable you to do differently.

MzUnderstood already exists, as one of our core and flagship programmes, fully embodying the 'H.E.R' (Healing, Empowerment, Resilience) ethos, values, aims, mission and vision of Milk Honey Bees. It enables us to do the individualised work with Black girls and young women, that improves their overall health and wellbeing, improves confidence and self-esteem, whilst also contributing to collective impact upon social and community cohesion. We know that nurturing a sense of Belonging is a key protective factor, when considered the multiplicity challenges that constitute individual and contextual risks for our girls and young women being vulnerable to criminal and other exploitation.

We know from our experience since 2017, that there is a dire need for this programme. In our 'See Us Hear Us' report, 100% of Black girls reflected that having race and gendered spaces like MHB, supported their wellbeing. We already have a waiting list for MzUnderstood, with Black girls telling us that they need a safe space to reflect, discuss, challenge and be creative, whilst healing from the personal, social, emotional, wellbeing and societal issues affecting them.

MzUnderstood provides what our Black girls have been asking for, in spaces where they need them.

Thus far, much of our work has been hyperlocal and place-based, across South East London, predominantly Southwark and Lambeth and with this funding, expanding Pan-London. However, through our published research, such as 'See Us, Hear Us' and 'In Her Shoes', we have developed some strong collaborations, in Manchester and Birmingham, including recently facilitating a day-long 'Black Girl Change Makers' event at Birmingham Newman University.

Our intention is to build upon these connections, to roll out MzUnderstood to beyond South East London, initially Pan-London and longer-term, nationally, collaborating with organisations and services, reaching Black girls and young women with whom we have begun to make connections. This will embed our trauma-informed, trauma-responsive and culturally-competent approach, as a necessary approach to being person-centred.

What expertise and track record do you have to be able to deliver this work successfully? Please specifically mention your expertise linked to gender and trauma informed approaches.

Milk Honey Bees was founded by a Black young woman, who through her own lived experience, including care-experience, recognised the need for empowering spaces where Black girls were not problematised but embraced as powerful, creative change agents.

Milk Honey Bees' mission is to create a safe, creative and empowering space where Black girls flourish. We amplify Black girlhood and dismantle systemic barriers through our mentorship, cultural programming and therapeutic support.

At the heart of our work is our ethos of Healing, Empowerment, and Resilience (H.E.R), which guides everything we do, ensuring that Black girls are equipped with tools to heal, thrive, and lead. Our programmes empower Black girls to embrace their full potential, find their voices and challenge the systems that try to limit them.

We are proud of the positive impact we have made with Black girls, through initiatives like our MzUnderstood Programme, which provides therapeutic mentoring with an intersectional approach

Our published work, 'Girlhood Unfiltered', has further amplified the voices of Black girls and been used as a resource to facilitate programmes nationwide. Additionally, our

social action/research projects, like 'See Us, Hear Us', have enabled Black girls to engage with critical social justice topics and become leaders in their communities. Our holistic approach supports Black girls through mentorship, community-building and creative expression, focusing on nurturing emotional wellbeing and intellectual growth, enabling them to be leaders in their lives.

Our focus on racial and gender justice ensures that Black girls, especially those at the intersection of multiple marginalised identities and are most at-risk, have the support, resources and space to flourish and lead on their own terms.

Milk Honey Bees' work places Black girls at the forefront of the issues that affect their justice, equality, and freedom offering a nurturing space where Black girls' needs for safety, belonging and care are met, using a Black Girlhood/Black Feminist framework to uplift and amplify Black girls' voices; to address the injustices they face, whilst celebrating their joy.

Milk Honey Bees disrupts systems and spaces, recognising Black girls as leaders, fostering community and sisterhood, building solidarity and affirming intersectional identities.

Through creative, supportive, empowering spaces, social action, advocacy and community leadership, Black girls are empowered to explore a range of issues, amplifying their voices and driving lasting change, to challenge systems of oppression and advocate for justice.

We provide opportunities for Black girls to co-produce research, engage in community conversations and drive advocacy work, amplifying their voices and centring lived experiences, encouraging change agency in challenging marginalising structures.

Please explain how the grant will be spent

The grant will be spent on a combination of direct delivery of our MzUnderstood programme and also upon deepening and strengthening our relationships with our target areas to reach Pan-London.

This will involve ensuring that our proportionate core costs are covered, which as a 'by and for' organisation, led solely by Black women and with a strong Black Girl Advisory and Leadership Group, is essential. We believe that how we engender resilience is by ensuring our own resilience and sustainability, by not overstretching ourselves or setting unattainable targets.

The funding will cover leadership investment, facilitator fees, co-creation and co-production activities supervision and training, travel costs, proportional venue costs, reasonable overheads, resources, sustenance, etc.

Who will be responsible for overseeing and delivering this work?

We have an eight-year reputation for delivering effective and impactful trauma-informed, trauma-responsive and culturally-relevant programmes with Black girls and young women and are known to be reliable and personable partners.

We have capacity to deliver this work, alongside our other obligations, taking an approach of mutual benefit in our collaborations and considering how the extension of the MzUnderstood programme co-exists and enhances what we already do.

Our staff team comprises a Senior Leadership team (three women); 17 paid staff members, 6 core staff and 11 paid peer mentors, affirming our commitment as a by and for organisation.

We have 5 volunteers - three Black women and three Black/mixed women.

The lead person for this work is Ebinehita Iyere, who is also the founder of Milk Honey Bees and will be responsible for programme oversight, attendance at meetings, participation in co-creation and co-production, reporting back and contributing to knowledge exchange.

Ebinehita is a qualified Therapeutic Practitioner, with qualifications including:

- A Degree in Criminology and Youth Studies - 2016
- Level 3 in Child Youth Bereavement - 2019

- AMBIT trained with Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families- 2019
- Narrative Therapy Training - 2020
- Diploma in Children and Adolescent Therapeutic Wellbeing - 2022
- PHD in Children and Young People's Services, with a focus on the education of Black Girls - Present.

Ebinehita's relevant experience includes:

- Worked at MAC UK as an Integrate Practitioner, using her in-depth understanding of effective therapeutic interventions to design new models of working for both community and statutory services.
 - Worked as a consultant for Power the Fight and co-designed the TIFP Mode
- Ebinehita will be accompanied by Sophie Arinde, Community Manager and 2 Peer Leads per project.

Sophie's background includes:

Degree in Politics and Sociology from University of Warwick, 2023

Therapeutic Mentoring Training - IATE 2024

Numerous roles as a tutor, assisting students with their learning, through lesson planning and supportive resources, 2019-2023.

Peer Leads are in paid roles, have direct lived experience and the benefit of mentoring, supervision and training, from external agencies and both Ebinehita and Sophie.

We also envision also working with local authorities to ensure we are working closely with them to ensure we are adhering to their policies.

How do you plan to continue this work once the grant ends?

Funding is a continued and ongoing investment for us, as a not-for-profit community interest organisation and we do invest in this, alongside our impending intention to further develop our broader strategy. By building individual and collective resilience through skills development, peer education and creating supportive environments, we ensure that MzUnderstood is embedded in our current and future plans.

An aspect of this includes fundraising activities, leadership development and strengthening the voice of Black girls and young women. We recognise the need for us to have a reliable infrastructure, clear plans and stable leadership model, so that we can provide the most effective work; crucial when considering the need to maintain trust and consistency in our programme delivery.

We are fully committed to future-proofing Milk Honey Bees, ensuring that we cover our core costs and support sustainability and long-term impact. Our focus is not just on short-term interventions but on fostering sustainable practice and programmes to be maintained long-term.

Our strategy, through creative, inclusive and iterative processes, is to increase vehicles for knowledge exchange, collaboration, partnership and alliances, whilst also enhancing our sustainability through upskilling our team, integrating business development activities. A key aspect of our sustainability beyond this funding timeline, is in leveraging our trusted relationships with the community and our valuable collaborations with other organisations and services. This means that we will continue to source funding for MzUnderstood from trusts and foundations, as well as via commissioned services through statutory services, across health, education, social care and youth justice.

A core intention is in exploring with our beneficiaries, how their voice translates to strategy and the relationship between voice, policies and systems for change, enabling us to expand upon our vital work with Black girls and young women, focused on those aged 10-25 years. Our intention is to mobilise our infrastructure and resources to reach more Black girls affected by systemic barriers such as adultification, mental health challenges, social disadvantage, hyper-invisibilisation, disproportionality and exclusionary practices across all services, including the youth/adult criminal justice system.

Milk Honey Bees will continue to shift harmful narratives, challenge stereotypes and dismantle systems that perpetuate inequality, ensuring Black girls have the resources,

mentorship and leadership opportunities to feel seen, heard, and valued. The development of further research, resources and evaluations, building upon 'See Us, Hear Us' to strengthen Milk Honey Bees' practice, will enable our sustainable impact and develop shared practice to inform cultural competence across the voluntary and statutory landscape and importantly, to benefit even more Black girls and young women.

Is your organisation led by women and are at least 80% of your organisation's total beneficiaries' women and girls? Please provide a breakdown of your beneficiary numbers for the past 2 years.

Milk Honey Bees CIC is a by and for grass roots organisation, with all Directors being women and working exclusively with Black girls and young women, aged 10-25 years with 12-18 being our hyper focus. We currently work with approximately 200 Black girls and young women per year, so over the past 2 years, we have directly worked with just 400 Black girls and young women, although through our research and events, have reached many more.

As an organisation passionately committed to and invested in co-creation and co-production, we centre the voices within our Black Girls Advisory and Leadership Board, which is currently composed of 20 girls, aged between 12 and 25 years. Our organisation is truly Black girl-led, even in terms of creating responses to funding bids, where consultation is inherent.

Our staff comprise a Senior Leadership team (three women); 17 paid staff members, 6 core staff and 11 paid peer mentors, affirming our commitment as a by and for organisation.

We have 5 volunteers - three Black women and three Black/mixed women.

Our founder and CEO, Ebinehita Iyere, developed Milk Honey Bees, as a response to her own lived experience, including being care-experienced and as a reflection to the need for systemic change related to work with Black girls and young women.

Our Black girl Advisory and Leadership Group is made up of a range of sub-groups, to enable focused attention on areas that matter.

Amongst some other team members, our Founder is neurodivergent and there is LGBTQ+ representation across our whole organisation.

Does your organisation have existing knowledge and expertise working across the criminal justice system?

Work with girls and young women involved in the criminal justice system cuts across all of our programmes:

MzUnderstood - Our community therapeutic mentoring programme that offers Black girls at risk of being involved in the youth justice system or first-time entrants the opportunity to receive individual and group mentoring sessions that focus on Healing, Mental Health, Behaviour, Healthy Relationships, Healthy Decision Making and Safety.

H.E.R Space - Our preventative community and schools-based mentorship programme, that supports Black girls at risk of entering the youth justice system. The focus of these sessions is on behaviour and healthy decision making, through therapeutic, holistic and creative activities.

Vanguard - Through this programme, High risk girls and young women have been directly referred to Milk Honey Bees through a local organisation, Juvenis, who work with Black boys and young men and we have offered direct support with their wellbeing, through therapeutic methods.

Divert youth/SAFE - A Lambeth-based programme - where Milk Honey Bees directly offered therapeutic mentoring to girls and young women who were first time entrants or were already in the youth/criminal justice system.

Lambeth Engage - A criminal justice-based engage project, where we worked with young girls directly from the police station. Also, through referrals directly from Juvenis. Alongside these programmes, those deemed to be high risk or at-risk of becoming involved in criminal justice, have always been directly referred to Milk Honey Bees for

additional wellbeing and preventative support.
 The following case example highlights our long-term work with TD.
 TD is currently one of our senior peer mentors aged 19 years, who first came to our organisation at the age of 14 years through a school referral. TD had previously been arrested and had experience within the youth offending service, as well as also experiencing school exclusion.
 Prior to us working with her, TD struggled with her confidence, public speaking and the fact she had a challenging schooling experience, whilst in secondary school. She had multiple challenges and really needed our trauma-informed approach, which follows the 'meaningful mentoring' concept, so that she received a long-term and sustained intervention from us.
 Through our training sessions and 1-2-1 therapeutic mentoring support she received, TD overcame her confidence issues and has been an excellent peer leader within Milk Honey Bees. She works incredibly hard to aid us in the facilitation and delivery of our sessions and it is incredibly rewarding to see her grow as an individual and gain the relevant experience she requires for her future aspirations, as she has stated that she would like to work with young people in the future.
 " MHB made me feel listened to and comfortable enough to express my emotions as I didn't before. It has also made me more confident with speaking in front of people."

Will you be receiving funding from any other sources for this project?	
NO	
Do all staff have enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks? If no please state why.	
Yes	
Reason why not all staff have DBS checks.	
Total funding requested in this application (£10,000 to £80,000 with a maximum of £40,000 in one year)	
£80000	
Proposed grant start date	Proposed grant duration in months
1/12/2026	24
How much funding is required each year?	
Year 1	Year 2
£40000	£40000
What was your organisation's expenditure in the most recent financial year?	What was your organisation's annual income in the most recent financial year?
£83668	£95231
What value of unrestricted reserves did your organisation have at the end of the most recent financial year?	
£9346	