

Organisation Name		Reference code
Trail-Blazers Mentoring Ltd		2022-11-YO66
Organisation Address		
Trailblazers Mentoring, HMYOI Aylesbury, Bierton Road Aylesbury Buckinghamshire HP20 1EH England		
Website Address		
www.trailblazersmentoring.org.uk		
Type of organisation? (tick all that apply and complete relevant details)		
Charity	Registered Charity Number	Date Registered
Yes	1074453	1998
Community Interest Company	Registered Companies House Number	Date Registered
No	3647928	1998
Social Enterprise	Social Enterprise Mark Awarded Yes/No	Date Awarded
No	No	N/A
<b>Grant Summary</b>		
Developing our work with young offenders aged 18-35, many having come through the care system and finding themselves in prison, by supporting them into work and further education via our mentoring services and employment partnerships		
<b>Please describe the needs that this project will address</b>		
<p>Trailblazers solely supports young people who are involved in the criminal justice system. Many of the men we support are early school leavers, have a low level of education attainment, poor levels of literacy, digital and financial management skills. Over 60% of the men we work with are from the BAME community and we also work with care leavers. Since the Covid pandemic, we have seen a significant increase in men reporting mental health issues, lack of motivation to engage in activities and a sense of hopelessness about their future. The most frequent reason men are referred for our mentoring services is for support to find employment or to access education/training. Poor employment outcomes for men in prison is well document, with only 16% securing employment within a year of release, with the issues mentioned above being key factors. During the pandemic, Trailblazers supported over 30% into employment/training and we aim to increase this outcome to 45% as restrictions have relaxed and greater employment opportunities present. Not having something meaningful to do with your time following release from prison is also a key factor in reoffending and trying to survive on benefits alone, especially with the cost of living crisis places many of the men we support at serious risk of poverty.</p> <p>There are many practical aspects that need to be addressed prior to and following release. These includes getting photographic ID, setting up bank accounts and securing accommodation which are key areas our volunteer mentors work with the men on. Mentors also help them write CVs, start job searching, sourcing suitable</p>		

employment, training and education opportunities, applying for jobs, and interview prep.

Trailblazer's mentoring service is delivered solely by volunteers and we are keen to grown this model. The men consider the volunteer mentors a lifeline to their local communities, keeping them connected and helping them prepare for release.

To enable us to expand our volunteer mentoring model for reasons outlined above and to achieve the target outcome of 45% securing an employment or training opportunity, we need develop and grow this area of our work and build on our existing partnership, including, a water board, sports organizations, recruitment companies and identify new ones which focus on offering meaningful employment and training opportunities and we are seeking funding for a F/T dedicated Partnerships Manager to focus on these areas.

**What are the key outcomes that you will be seeking to achieve for young offenders?**

- increasing our ETE partners by 75% so young people can be offered work placements
- 45% of the men we support will have an employment opportunity in the first year of release
- all young people will have tailored and specific support to have the practical aspects in place to be able to access the employment market (eg bank account, ID, CVs)
- all young people will be offered a basic smart phone (if they need it) to be able to access and apply for jobs online (almost 70% of men currently take up this offer)
- all young people will be able to spend time preparing for interviews and be interview trained to give them the best possible chance of success whilst building their confidence in interview skills and how to tackle certain questions
- all young people will continue to be supported by TB through their first employment role giving them someone they trust to discuss issues but more importantly continuing to build their confidence once on a work placement
- all young people will receive additional training if required to further their skills giving more chances to move up the employment/career ladder in the future

**What are the key activities you will undertake with this funding?**

Our key objective is to secure funding for the position of Partnerships Manager focusing on ensuring we have sufficient volunteers to meet demand for mentoring (increasing numbers with lived experience) and building our corporate/community employment partnerships for the purpose of getting young men into meaningful/long lasting work. Annually each project aims to support 30 people in custody who are preparing for release (and continued support in the community).

This will enable Trailblazers to not only meet its current annual target to support c150 mentees with 85% income focused on frontline delivery but also:-

- build out current innovative partnerships (e.g. Digital Poverty Alliance to digitally enable ex-offenders helping get them back into work /education)
- extend post-release support /ETE opportunities (currently working with a number of corporate partners including Bridge Recruitment to support young men to become 'work ready' and confident)
- Replicate the success of the accredited peer-to-peer mentoring at HMP Oakwood for in-custody mentors supported by Birmingham Adult Education, in other adult prisons ? continue recruitment, training and support of new volunteer mentors (currently 37 in training and awaiting security clearance)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- build operational resilience through more robust systems, policies and procedures with pro bono training and IT support underway.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Who will be responsible for overseeing and delivering this work?</b></p> <p>Service Delivery Director, with support from the CEO.</p> <p>The Partnership Manager role would be 4 days per week/28 hours to enable them to fully immerse themselves into the communities and geographical areas TB currently delivers services in and also build links in new geographical areas, as part of service expansion plans. They will also be instrumental in increasing the number and range of employment partners. The post holder will work with them to develop sustainable routes to employment for ex-offenders and provide training and guidance about employing ex-offenders which we have done previously (lack of understanding of those with lived experience is a barrier frequently cited by employers why they don't employ those with a criminal record). We anticipate this training need will grow, as we engage with more corporates and local businesses.</p>
<p><b>How will your organisation continue to sustain this project after the grant ends?</b></p> <p>As mentioned, TB have been proving corporate partners with training and guidance about employing ex-offenders. This includes delivering workshops covering the challenges young people leaving prison face, licence conditions (how this can impact employment) and offering support to develop risk assessments and ensure the men are 'work ready'. We offer support with young people they employ, as the men will still have a TB mentor for a period. We have started to charge partners for this support service and we are increasing the number of corporates and businesses, so this will be a key source of income to sustain the Partnership Manager post. In addition, the Partnership Manager will also deliver similar workshops to education providers, other charities for a fee (already started doing this).</p>
<p><b>What expertise and track record do you have to be able to deliver this work successfully?</b></p> <p>TB is about to celebrate its 25th anniversary providing mentoring services to young people involved in the criminal justice system, both in prison and the community. We are a well established and regarded organization within the 5 prisons we currently operate in and receive frequent requests from other prisons to set up a mentoring service. Unfortunately as a small charity we are unable to offer services to all but we started mentoring at HMP Oakwood last year and have ambitious expansion plans to meet the demand for TB services. As well as young people supported by TB having significantly better employment outcomes as mentioned earlier, they have a lower reoffending rate - 10% in the first 12 month following release, versus almost 25.6% national average (MoJ 2022)</p> <p>We offer consistency of support from prison, through the gate, into the community; utilizing skills of people in the young people's local communities to be mentors and focus on building local partnerships with corporates to develop employment opportunities.</p> <p>Our target is to open in 4 more resettlement prisons by end 2024 with a target to double our mentees by the end of 2024 following the growth trajectory achieved in the last 12 months.</p>
<p><b>Explain how the grant will be spent</b></p> <p>It will cover part of the salary costs of a part time Partnership Manager</p> <p>f/t Costs at £36,000 per annum (on the basis of 5 day week)</p>

<p>p/t Costs at £26,880 per annum (on the basis of 4 day week)  Tax and NI = £4792 per annum</p> <p>plus in year one the costs for:  Laptop and printer at £850  Travel expenses at £1200</p> <p>Total costs required in Y1 = £33,722  Total Costs required in Y2 = £32,872</p>	
<b>Will you be receiving funding from any other sources for this project?</b>	
Yes	
<b>Do all staff have enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks? If no please state why.</b>	
Yes	
<b>Reason why not all staff have DBS checks.</b>	
<b>Total funding requested in this application (£10,000 to £60,000 with a maximum of £30,000 in one year)</b>	
£55,000	
<b>Proposed grant start date</b>	<b>Proposed grant duration in months</b>
10/04/2023	24
<b>How much funding is required each year?</b>	
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>
£30,000	£25,000
<b>What was your organisation's expenditure in the most recent financial year?</b>	<b>What was your organisation's annual income in the most recent financial year?</b>
£468,418	£417,130
<b>What value of unrestricted reserves did your organisation have at the end of the most recent financial year?</b>	
£45,351	