The City of London Growing Localities Awards 2013/14

A. About the Awards

Lemos&Crane working with City Bridge Trust presents the Growing Localities Awards 2013/14. A total of £2,500 prize money is being offered to projects using nature to enhance and improve local communities and the lives of vulnerable or socially excluded people, generating positive outcomes such as health and well-being, new skills and knowledge, new relationships, and a sense of purpose and belonging.

There will be 6 award categories from which a winner and three runners up will be selected:

The 6 award categories are:

- **GARDENING AND GROWING FOOD** – for communal eating and small-scale enterprise
- **LOOKING AFTER ANIMALS** – bees, chickens, pigs, etc for the experience of care but also to farm
- **NATURE-THEMED ARTS AND CRAFTS** – woodcraft, photography, film-making, writing, etc
- **EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES ABOUT WILDLIFE AND NATURE** – including trips and excursions to teach people about flora and fauna
- **RECLAIMING AND DEVELOPING WASTELAND** – projects initiated and led by residents and tenants
- **“GREEN” EXERCISE** – groups for walking, cycling, running, etc with a nature theme

Entries are invited from non-profit organisations in London such as:

- Community-based and voluntary organisations
- Faith groups
- Health organisations
- Homeless agencies
- Hospices
- Prisons
- Resident committees
- Schools
- Social housing providers
- Social care providers
- Supported housing providers (providing mental health services, substance misuse, learning disabilities, etc)
B. Timetable

- Deadline for entries – Friday 24th January, 2014
- Shortlist announced – Friday 21st February, 2014
- Winners announced – April 2014

C. Rules and procedures

1. Entries must be completed using this entry form and submitted electronically here

2. Receipt of all entries submitted online will be automatically acknowledged.

3. Entrants may be asked to provide further information.

4. The judges' decision is final. Awards will be made at the judges' discretion and no correspondence will be entered into concerning any decision. Not all the awards advertised may be awarded if the judges consider the criteria have not been met. Additional commendations may be made at the judges' discretion.

5. The content of any entry may be used for informing other practitioners and also for publicity purposes unless the entrant withholds their consent to this in writing.

6. Entrants are deemed to have accepted these rules and procedures and to have agreed to be bound by them when entering this competition.

D. Your Entry

Please do not exceed 1500 words in total.

1. Name of the project you are entering for The City of London Growing Localities Awards 2013/2014

   Vineyard Volunteering for All

2. Award category you are entering

   Gardening and growing food

3. Describe your project in one sentence

   Enabling and supporting vulnerable adults with a range of support needs to enjoy the health,
wellbeing, educational and social benefits of volunteering in a supportive and friendly team which is working to develop a unique, not-for-profit social enterprise.

4. Specify the setting(s) where your project is delivered (eg homeless agency, housing organisation etc)?

The project takes place at Forty Hall Community Vineyard, a community-led social enterprise based on a beautiful organic farm in Enfield. The farm is accessible by public transport and is only a short bus ride from built up areas of extremely high deprivation such as Edmonton and Ponders End where most of our target volunteers live without access to gardens or growing spaces. Forty Hall Community Vineyard was first funded in 2010 and now has ten acres of land under vine. The vineyard hopes, eventually, to produce upwards of 10,000 bottles of still and sparkling white wine a year. Award-winning, organic wine maker Will Davenport of Davenport Vineyards will be making the wine, which will be sold on site at the Farm and at sustainable food outlets and restaurants around London. The wine will be made as naturally as possible using natural yeasts and minimal interventions and the sparkling wines will be made in the traditional Champagne method. Vines planted include the Champagne varieties Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier and two less well-known varieties, Bacchus and Ortega. FHCV is London’s only commercial scale vineyard and the UK’s only community led vineyard.

5. What are the project’s objectives?

- Creating opportunities for greater participation in volunteering activities in a safe and supportive environment
- Supporting underrepresented and vulnerable communities to get involved in volunteering
- Investing in people to give them greater confidence and new skills to access opportunity
- Reducing the stigma experienced by people with mental health issues
- Linking people to opportunity and broader social networks – providing opportunities to meet new people and make new friends

6. What are the project’s activities?
The project is multi stranded and volunteer activities include: working on all aspects of vineyard maintenance (pruning, weeding, leaf removal, mulching and, of course, harvest); hosting open days on site and showing visitors the vineyard; staffing stalls at community events as part of the PR for the vineyard and as a volunteer recruitment opportunity; training for volunteers in basic horticultural skills, mental health awareness training, healthy living, health and safety (level 1); emergency first aid; training in vineyard maintenance skills, marketing and wine knowledge; social activities including picnics, shared lunches, group cooking using a clay oven in the vineyard built by volunteers; apple pressing; group outings to other vineyards and food growing projects, joint working with other local food producers. Volunteers are encouraged to take on additional leadership responsibilities such as Team Leading, mentoring newly recruited volunteers, joining the Management Committee and organising social events and other volunteer-led activities on site including bee keeping, willow weaving and leading healthy walks.

7. What has been the impact / achievement of the project?

In the last three years, we have worked with over 60 registered volunteers, 160 vulnerable people attending our horticultural therapy programmes and over 800 occasional volunteers (team challenge days, days out, taster days, etc). Last year (2013) we recruited & trained 35 new registered volunteers of whom 13 are vulnerable adults in need of additional support and guidance. We delivered tailored support and volunteering sessions to over 50 vulnerable adults and children from four local organisations including Asian women, adults with learning difficulties and families under stress. We also trained 5 volunteers as new Team Leaders enabling us to run additional sessions throughout the year and at weekends.

Volunteers report that enjoy working outdoors and, that as a result of their participation in the project, they feel more able to meet and talk to new people, they feel more connected to nature and are interested in & inspired by the activities offered by the project. Our users consistently report marked improvement in their mental health & wellbeing & a reduction in social isolation as a result of their participation at FHCV. Other beneficial impacts of the project reported by participants include:

- improved psychological and physical health and wellbeing
- greater self-confidence and self-esteem
- improved social and communication skills
- improved vocational skills
- greater employability
- supported routes into volunteering/employment opportunities & accredited training
- respite and support for carers

The wider community impact of the project include:
improved access to nature and open spaces
stronger and more sustainable communities
local pride of place through the development of London’s only commercial scale vineyard
reduced stigma and stereotyping of people with mental health issues

The Volunteer Team Leaders (aka the Wild Bunch!) were recently shortlisted in the Mayor of London ‘s Team London Award 2013. They were also shortlisted from a huge long list for the Local Food Hero national awards run by the Lottery’s Local Food initiative. Over 20 of our volunteers have been awarded LB Enfield 100 Hours Awards and all our volunteers are signed up to the Spice Time Credits scheme (www.justaddspice.org).

A key element of the volunteering project is to provide greater public access to & enjoyment of the natural environment & to engage participants in the preservation & enhancement of the local flora, fauna & insect biodiversity. Forty Hall Community Vineyard was recently awarded the Green Business of the Year 2013 award by the RSA & Enfield Enterprise and has successfully completed Enterprise Enfield’s Green Light environment audit to BS8555 standard.

8. How is your project evaluated?

Monitoring: we monitor project progress using a range of qualitative measures including surveys, feedback forms, one-to-one interviews, case studies, focus groups and review days; quantitative measures such as attendance sheets, monitoring hours, photographic and video records are also used. This project will also monitor impact by introducing the use of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS).

Reviewing: key milestones are identified and timescales set for their delivery; action plans, monthly reports and user feedback are monitored, reviewed and managed by the Executive Committee; project planning and programming is reviewed in line with user feedback.

Evaluation: an annual evaluation report is produced based on the evidence gathered through monitoring and at facilitated volunteer review days. Volunteers and beneficiaries are involved in setting all targets for future action. Action plans are agreed and monitored by the Executive Committee.

A successful ecotherapy pilot project, Fine @ the Vine, was independently evaluated in 2013 with very positive findings. This work is now forming the foundation of a new project, Flourish, which
will extend and develop ecotherapy support work at the vineyard.

Volunteers are involved in all aspects of monitoring, evaluation and project planning. FHCV was recently awarded the **Investing in Volunteering** accreditation (May 2013) which includes volunteer involvement in evaluation and decision making as one of the measurable indicators of quality.

9. **How would you spend the prize money to develop the project?**

We would use the money to develop and expand our training programme for volunteers. We plan to run health taster days on site during the summer to allow people, particularly those with mental health support needs, to try out a range of health interventions which are proven to help reduce stress and enhance wellbeing including Mindfulness training, Tai Chi, massage, Zumba dance, willow weaving, Yoga, walking, working with farm animals, singing and making music (ukulele workshops!). We also want to train interested volunteers in working with heavy horses as we will soon be using horse drawn ploughs in the vineyard and need to train volunteers to manage this work.

E. **Submitting your entry**

Please return this entry form by **Friday 24th January 2014** by uploading it on [this page](#)

If you have problems uploading your entry or would like to add documents, photos, videos or other media that are relevant to your entry, please email them to [awards@lemosandcrane.co.uk](mailto:awards@lemosandcrane.co.uk) quoting ‘The City of London Growing Localities 2013/2014 entry’ and your organisation name in the subject heading.

Thank you for your entry.