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

   Growing for Life

2. Award category you are entering

   Gardening and Growing Food

3. Describe your project in one sentence
The project offers brain injury survivors meaningful occupation, maintaining our large canal side garden and part of the canal towpath, growing vegetables and herbs which we use in our lunch club where food is on sale to our members, staff and people from the surrounding residences and businesses.

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

Headway East London is a charity that supports people affected by brain injury; it is based in LB Hackney and supports people from across 14 north and east London boroughs.

5. **What are the project’s objectives?**

- Provide meaningful occupation for our members who have an interest in gardening
- Maintain a beautiful and restful space for our members (and for others living in the development)
- Grow a variety of vegetables and herbs for our lunch club
- Grow herbs and fruit trees which are accessible to the public
- Build an outdoor pizza oven for use by Headway members and for fundraising events

6. **What are the project’s activities?**

- General gardening, weeding, planting and picking in our own garden
- Maintaining an area of the public canal towpath, planting herbs and fruit trees
- Building and maintaining accessible planters
- Sewing vegetables and herbs to grow fresh produce for the Headway kitchen
- Offering day-long projects to corporate volunteers and working alongside them – this also raises awareness of the work of Headway and the effects of brain injury
- We built a clay pizza oven which has been used to cook food for the members and at our Summer Open Day where local chefs, staff and members cooked pizza from scratch for the guests

7. **What has been the impact / achievement of the project?**
For people who worked outdoors prior to their injury, and for those who enjoy gardening, working the garden has been a real bonus.

Over 20 members have been involved in the project; it improves self-esteem and people feel they have made a real and significant contribution to the Headway community, especially when they see their produce being cooked and eaten.

30-40 of our members are involved in the lunch club, they are able to decide on recipes for the kitchen using the fresh ingredients that are available; a particular favourite has been beetroot brownies – this was obviously not a lunch recipe!

Three large corporates have been down to volunteer their time to help keep the garden in order – each has maintained and/or increased their involvement with the charity as a result of these volunteering days.

The 200 members, staff and volunteers are able to enjoy a thriving, beautiful garden.

8. How is your project evaluated?

People involved in the project have reported back their sense of satisfaction in working in the garden.

As an organisation, we do a more formal self-esteem study every two years and see consistent improvement in self-esteem amongst our membership. It is not so easy to identify the direct impact of specific activities as members take part in a variety of activities, therapies and occupational projects across their one or two days at Headway.

(NB Self-esteem has been established as one of the factors most strongly associated with good outcome after brain injury; study by Whitnall et al ’06)

Over 100 people each week eat food produced by the lunch club. Although we do not produce anywhere near enough vegetables to keep up with that level of demand, when we do use our own produce it is always enjoyed and appreciated.

We cannot evaluate how many people have taken advantage of the Towpath herb & fruit garden, but we know people are using the herbs.

We have received positive feedback from corporate volunteers involved in the garden – they all want to return

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

We would repair and add to our accessible planters, buy more seeds (more varieties of veg) and possibly a couple of fruit trees.
The pizza oven will be repaired ready for Summer ‘14

We will plant additional herbs on the Towpath and replace one of the fruit trees which hasn’t survived.

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 quoting ‘The City of London Growing Localities 2013/2014 entry’ and your organisation name in the subject heading.

Thank you for your entry.