



- Promoting African centred approaches to developing people and communities

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

PHILOSOPHY

'We should go down to the grassroots of our culture, not to remain there, not to be isolated there, but to draw strength and substance there-from, and with whatever additional resources and strength and material we acquire, proceed to set up a new form of society raised to the level of human progress'

Sekou Toure, First President of Guinea



Sankofa afamfa

'A return to the past must be guided by critical examination'

MISSION STATEMENT

Research, develop and promote African centred approaches to developing people, organisations and communities

SOLIDARITY AND PARTNERSHIP

Griot aims to:

- embrace the cultural distinctiveness, spiritualities and differences that reflect people everywhere
- respect and affirm people in the ways in which we develop working alliances, organise and deliver our undertakings with people from a diversity of backgrounds, faiths and cultures

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chair	Cheryl Bowen
Treasurer	Estella Weston
Secretary	Beverley Green
Trustee:	Beverley O'Connor

Volunteers	Noreen Howard, Project Manager Chichi Ukandu, MA Financial Management, Accounts Manager, Greenwich University Intern
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RESIGNED	Diana Grant
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FUNDERS

Esmee Fairbain Trust
Lewisham Arts and Culture Office

ACCOUNTANT

Ola Obadina, Chartered Accountant - Lockwell Jones

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

This report presents work done from November 2008 to October 2009 by the Griot Institute which is funded by the Griot Foundation Trust. It also reports on our financial accounts, as is usual for Griot, from April 2008 to March 2009.

Griot Institute is a grass roots community development organization running training courses in organizational effectiveness for Black-led community groups, discussion forums on gender, diversity and leadership for women in public life and a peer learning and health promotion program for women with chronic fibroids. Griot's work is predominantly [80%] with Black and Minority Ethnic organizations and we attract a wide range of all communities to our Green Office workshops and our Women in Public Life forums.

Last year was a busy one during which we reviewed our policies and spent time searching for new trustees with skills in personnel, organisational development, marketing and financial management and with links in further and higher education

We are delighted to welcome Ola Obadina, Chartered Accountant from Lockwell Jones as our new accountant. We also welcome her insights into increasing organisational effectiveness and we are working on fundraising for the required training and systems

Due to pressure of work Diane Grant resigned during the summer holidays. We would like to thank her for her contributions as trustee and wish her well in the future.

I would also like to extend thanks to remaining trustees and welcome Beverley Green to our Board and look forward to working with her and with other professionals in the process of applying to become trustees

Cheryl Bowen, Chair

SUMMARY OF PROJECTS

JELI KUMA - AFRICANS AND AFRICAN CARIBBEANS WORKING TOGETHER

A storytelling performance by an African Griot with a musical a kora performance followed by a debate on why strong partnerships between African and African Caribbean organisations in the community are so few.

Discussions explored the issues of partnership and leadership. familiar and uncomfortable truths were expressed. participants were challenged and left having explored practical ideas for action and change.

This event was aimed at everybody working in community organisations including trustees, volunteers and managers. Marketing was done in partnership with the Lewisham Ethnic Minority Partnership. A lively discussion explored a range of difficult and positive experiences of partnership with recommendations to Griot on further work in this area.

The gathering concluded that partnership was very possible but that time was a key factor to develop trust and that different funding levels and regimes would work help to facilitate more lasting partnerships. Griot was asked to explore this issue further as many matters remained untackled due to the limited time available

TIMEBANK

The Griot Institute delivered a free workshop on charity trustee skills. The workshop was designed as a taster and suitable for people interested in knowing what trustees do, what powers they have and what the Charity Commissioners consider to be good governance - that is good practice for trustees. It could also have been of use to anyone thinking of becoming a trustee at some stage in the future.

The Griot Institute delivered this workshop for free because we were seeking the most effective way of recruiting new trustees from the local area with a range of experience and knowledge interested in contributing to groups and organisations in their neighbourhood

The 'Bite size trustee skills workshop covered:

- What's a charity?
- What's a trustee?
- Charity governing instrument
- Basic legal roles and responsibilities
- Short case study / role play on committee roles
- Useful places for trustees to go for information

The workshop was very well received and two participants from the eight attendees have expressed an interest in knowing more about Griot before fully committing to joining the Griot Board of Trustees

FIRBOIDS WORKSHOPS @ ISIS

Griot has developed a programme of 4 experiential workshops on the essentials of managing fibroids for women-only groups. These have been trialled in children's centres and Isis and are now ready for marketing. Workshops were led by experienced practitioners for a range of women including those suffering from chronic fibroids who were seeking practical information to make decisions about what to do about their fibroids.

A volunteer intern is being sought to undertake marketing of the programme across London as a cost

INFRASTRUCTURE

We have successfully recruited a personnel and regeneration professional and an experienced founder and manager of a health related charity to contribute to the development of our policies for staff recruitment and management and outcomes evaluation and fundraising. Current fundraising applications are for capacity building and project development.

Marketing has been identified as a weakness of our project management and we are working with Wendy Jackson from Bitesizemarketing.co.uk.

FUNDRAISING AND BUSINESS PLAN

We have updated our workplan and have identified funding sources for the projects planned for 2009. A number of applications are being drafted.

TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY CONTRACTS

Griot will be seeking commissions for training and consultancy to generate much needed unrestricted funds for our running costs. This area of fundraising is critical and we are seeking support from an advisory panel constituted from people who value our work and can contribute time and expertise to helping our fundraising efforts.

CHINYERE UKANDU, MA. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & INTERN FROM GREENWICH UNIVERSITY

At Griot, we are constantly overstretched with work to do and fundraising for project grants and we have always relied on having someone with the requisite skills to do our book-keeping annual accounts preparation. This is a key role on which a charity's integrity and ability to fundraise depends. In 2008 we approached the Greenwich mentoring service for a volunteer accounts manager.



We are very grateful to Ed Paxton at the Guidance & Employability Team (GET) who met with Griot to evaluate our needs and arranged an interview with Vivian Chinyere Ukandu, who at the time was a student on a Masters Degree in Finance Management.

We were immediately struck by Chinyere's high level of motivation, her very smart presentation, her interest in and keenness to support our work. She was very amenable to attending courses and to visiting other organizations as part of her induction and ongoing training. As community development was a new concept for her, we organized for her to go on a one day per week course over eight weeks whilst she volunteered for us for two days per week. Chinyere also met with our accountant to undertake the final work for the inspection of our accounts and their signing off by trustees.

Chinyere became a most valued team member whose work and highly skilled inquiry has identified many changes that we have undertaken in the organization. As our volunteer has been the most punctual, reliable, professional and most likeable person we have had the pleasure of working with. Chinyere Ukandu has returned to Lagos, Nigeria to pursue a long-term aim to develop a micro financing project promoting economic development for local women and we wish her great success with her future endeavors

CALL FOR TRUSTEES

Griot's priority is to fundraise for project work it has piloted. We are looking for people with management experience and time to work in an unpaid capacity to develop the Trust.

So, if over the next year you can contribute:

- three hours work at home each month
- attendance at three Saturday meetings
- attendance at three evening meetings
- management experience in planning, finance, staff or policy development
- an interest / understanding of project management and evaluation, social enterprise, community development, business and strategic planning

INTERESTED?

- Contact
- Cheryl Bowen, Chair via griotonline@hotmail.com
- Noreen Howard, Project Manager via griotonline@hotmail.com OR on 020 8691 7201

It is a requirement in Griot that trustees receive a basic understanding of their roles, responsibilities and good practice policies and free training will be provided on dates agreed with trustees in January [subject to successful funding]

In addition to specific induction training on Griot, trustee will also get training on their roles in the financial management requirements for the trust, marketing, fundraising and evaluation of outcomes.

You will gain valuable skills in organisational management that you can add to your CV.

Voluntary Action Lewisham [VAL] will be running a course on the 'Roles and responsibilities of management committees', **Tuesday 12th May, 2010. 10am - 1pm**

By the end of VAL's course you will be able to

- recognise the need for clarity in terms of roles,
- identify key legal responsibilities
- and be able to develop draft role descriptions

Apply to jacqui@valewisham.org.uk