



PRESS RELEASE

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Eight social entrepreneurs from East London secure grants to grow!

Social Ark, a charity in East London supporting young people from working class communities to develop their social businesses has this week granted over £10,000 to eight social entrepreneurs thanks to a partnership with East Wick and Sweetwater (EWS) which is a joint venture between Places for People and Balfour Beatty Investments who are working with the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), to develop 1,500 homes at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

The partners came together to put out a call to East London social entrepreneurs that had been through the Social Ark programmes to invest in their potential for growth. Eight grants have been awarded to the entrepreneurs who will now deliver specific projects and services with those funds and be filmed in the process.

As social entrepreneurs, the grants not only help to sustain their businesses during this time, but they also deliver measurable social impact in their communities. Grantees include [The Film Bunch](#) who usually bring those who are deaf and hard of hearing, together with the hearing community for inclusive arts and cultural events supported by British Sign Language interpreters. COVID19 means the founder, Shajna Begum, is taking the events online and potentially, supporting thousands to enjoy inclusive short films during this time of crisis. Another grantee, Simone Gaillard, is using the grant and the impact of COVID19 to spend this time and money enhancing the visibility of her brand for Time 2 Shine London, a cleaning business that empowers single mothers to do as she did and secure cleaning work that fits around their needs as a parent. Simone said:

*"I'm thrilled that Social Ark, LLDC and East Wick and Sweetwater believe in my business and long-term vision. Delivering exceptional cleaning services while empowering single mums with flexible employment and support ensures I'm building a socially conscious business that's needed and sustainable". **Simone Gaillard, Time 2 Shine London Founder***

17 individuals applied for a grant between £500 and £2000 per award and granted for the purpose of helping those with a track record to further grow their social businesses; through testing new

programmes and services, reaching new customers and beneficiaries and strengthening their current business plans. Eight hard working social entrepreneurs were shortlisted and asked to deliver a presentation to a panel with representatives from LLDC, EWS and Social Ark. Each grantee will also get the support of monthly peer-group sessions and expert 1:1 support.

"This is a great opportunity for our young entrepreneurs to deliver even more social impact. Our entrepreneurs are the real deal regardless of the odds stacked against them. They're using their own lived experiences to bring people together, making our communities more equal and inclusive for everyone. I'd like to say thank you to EWS and LLDC for this opportunity". **Lisa Stepanovic, CEO and Founder of Social Ark**

"Now, more than ever, it's vital that we support local enterprise and encourage young entrepreneurs to develop their services to improve the lives of local people. As it develops over time, East Wick and Sweetwater will be home to a flourishing network of creative businesses, so we're very pleased to have partnered with Social Ark to provide the grants to these talented young entrepreneurs." **Andrew Atkins, Development Director, East Wick and Sweetwater**

"We are so pleased to be supporting these young social entrepreneurs who have adapted their businesses and are making a huge difference to their communities during Covid-19. These young people are coming up with new and innovative ideas to help bring their communities together and keep their businesses sustainable." **Michelle May, Director of Socio-Economic Regeneration, London Legacy Development Corporation**

The grants come at a time when Social Ark has launched its first ever appeal for public support, the [Social Ark Family Mutual Aid Appeal](#). COVID19 has hit the organisation and its family of social entrepreneurs hard, with little support from Government on offer to help keep the once thriving start-ups to survive during the current crisis. The appeal has raised over £2,500 from public donations with a target of £10,000 still to be reached.

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Notes to editors

Social Ark CIC is a social enterprise incubator programme, based in Tower Hamlets, that supports young people from under-resourced communities to use their lived experiences to develop social businesses of their own. We also deliver our business development and leadership programmes to schools, youth organisations, other non-profits and prisons.

The grants were awarded to:

1. **Sandro Monteiro** is the founder of Sandro's Cakery. He is an experienced talented baker and youth educator. Sandro is using this opportunity to take his interactive fun and amazingly creative baking session on-line, hoping they'll go some way to ease some of the anxiety we're all feeling at the moment. Baked products made during the sessions will be shared with people struggling with homelessness in and across Newham. Follow Sandro [@SandrosCakery](#)
2. **Shajna Begum** is the founder of The Film Bunch. The first of its kind organisation that brings Deaf and Hard of Hearing people together with the hearing community to enjoy monthly inclusive arts and cultural events. In response to COVID-19 The Film Bunch are adapting how they work and are going online! They'll be sharing fun and interactive sign language videos, and by hosting their brilliant monthly film screenings they'll keep their fanbase content and attract new members! Follow The Film Bunch [@TheFilmBunch](#)
3. **Moses Adeyemi** is the founder and CEO of social enterprise, The SilverLine Programme. SilverLine uses a combination of Mental and Physical training to improve well-being and has been successfully delivering community projects since 2015. Although Moses has had much success and recognition, he still works with a large number of people on voluntary basis providing group exercise, and 1:1 support. Moses is using this opportunity to carry on supporting them online, due to Covid-19, ensuring they're able to access to the things they need to take part. Follow Moses [@moses_ican](#)
4. **Shanea Oldham** is the founder of Your Life More Life (YLML), a supportive youth-led organisation that empowers young people from marginalised communities that are impacted by serious youth violence. Adapting to the Covid-19 crisis, YLML is going online delivering regular engaging sessions! The interactive and engaging 'Change-Maker Diaries' will provide a platform where young people can gain support, learn new things, and have access to positive role models and inspirational leaders. Follow Shanea and Your Life More Life [@ProjectYLML](#)
5. **Sanyu Musoke** is the Founder of YUCAN, an early stage project for young carers. Sanyu is a young carer with lived experience of the struggle's carers face. Sanyu is using this opportunity to remotely engage with young carers and work with them to co-design a well-being service that truly meets their needs and has been designed exclusively developed by young carers for young carers. Over the coming weeks Sanyu will be working online on her website, conducting outreach and co-designing the YUCAN pilot. You can follow Sanyu [@YUCANREACH](#)
6. **Simone Gaillard** is the founder of Time 2 shine London, a vibrant socially conscious cleaning business based in East London. Time 2 Shine London offers outstanding cleaning services while supporting single mothers, like herself, with flexible employment. The Covid19 Lockdown has meant Simone has had to think about different ways to keep her brand and vision alive. Simone is using this time to create interactive engaging online content, generating support for her brand while sharing tips around keeping us all safe during this time. Follow Simone [@Simone_Gaillard](#)
7. **Sandy Abdelrahman** is the founder of Skaped- A platform that encourages young people from all backgrounds and abilities to engage with their human rights through the creative arts. Their ethos focusses on the power of debate and making sure young people are taught to question everything. Skaped delivers workshops, art projects, and interactive inspirational talks, they're using this opportunity to develop their programmes. Skaped will be working with young volunteers who'll take part in meaningful work experience. Follow Skaped [@TheSkaped](#)
8. **JR Josephs** is founder of Sirlute [@Pepperststudio](#), a music studio charity providing affordable studio space and music workshops for 'at risk youth'. Directly responding to the COVID-19 lockdown Sirlute has created an interactive online music making

programme especially for 'key workers' children. They'll learn new skills and make friends while working together to create individual music pieces they can be proud of! Follow Sirlute's journey [@sirlute](#)