

Bright One, an agency of volunteers, wants to teach NGOs about comms industry

Volunteer agency launches

By Chloe Markowicz

An agency staffed completely by volunteers was created this week to help charities that need PR support but cannot afford the costs.

Bright One aims to teach small charities, NGOs and social enterprises about the basics of the comms industry as well as providing professional PR support to promote their work.

It has been set up by Hot-wire's programme executive Ben Matthews. The four other founding board directors include MD of Diffusion PR Daljit Bhurji and National Year of Reading campaigns manager Elizabeth Bananuka.

Initial clients include Camp Quality UK (of which Matthews is a founder), Mesomoco (a mental health charity) and Enabled by Design (a social enterprise).

Matthews said Bright One was not about competing with existing agencies but about



Charity Camp Quality UK taking children with life-threatening illnesses to Chaminox, France

providing a service to organisations otherwise squeezed out of the market. 'Seventy per cent of charities bring in less than £10,000 a year, so they cannot afford PR,' he said.

The agency will charge a fee for its services, but these are not fixed and will depend on what the charity can afford.

'We are pitching ourselves below market value. All the money we generate will go back to Bright One,' said Matthews.

The agency will encourage both PR professionals and students to volunteer. Students will be mentored and supervised by senior PROs. Char-

ities paying more will get more hours with senior PR people. The agency is in talks with London Met University about recruiting student volunteers.

Bright One is also encouraging agencies to sign up for a certain number of volunteer hours a month to improve its CSR standing.