



Questions and answers from the EdTech Demonstrator Schools and Colleges Programme Skype Q & A sessions

6 and 7 November 2019

Thank you to everybody who attended the EdTech Demonstrator Skype Q&A sessions on Wednesday 6 November and Thursday 7 November 2019. We have collated the questions asked and answers provided over both sessions under the following subheadings:

- Expectations on the use of Tech
- Investment and use of technology
- Accountability, evidencing impact and evaluation
- Type and reach of the support provided by Demonstrators
- General Programme and application form questions
- Eligibility criteria
- Marketing and funding
- Consortium working
- The Delivery Partner

Please be aware that answers have been combined where questions were duplicated across sessions. Questions raised that have a comprehensive response within the EOI have been omitted.

If you have any further questions ahead of the application deadline on **22 November 2019**, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at edtech.team@education.gov.uk.

Expectations on the use of Tech

What do you mean by ‘Tech Agnostic’? Successful tech strategies in schools / colleges may rely heavily on one particular system/platform.

The support offered by Demonstrators should not be tied to a specific technology platform, product or company (we would not want to create a situation where institutions being supported by the Demonstrators need to change their entire tech infrastructure so as to benefit from the support on offer). However, we recognise that there will be an element of Demonstrators drawing on their expertise and knowledge of particular operating systems/platforms/products.

Accountability, evidencing impact and evaluation

What is the expectation as a demonstrator beyond 2021?

At present, due to purdah restrictions, we are unable to comment on the long term plans for the programme. We hope, beyond purdah, to clarify arrangements beyond 2021.¹

Do you have to be part of an existing technology flagship schools/college programme in order to apply to become a Demonstrator?

We are aware of a range of industry-led flagship programmes for schools and colleges which recognise and support the use of technology in schools. However schools and colleges do not need to be part of such a programme in order to apply to become a Demonstrator. Applicants must be able demonstrate in the application that they are using tech effectively and are able to share this good practice.

How will you evaluate the programme and how much reporting should Demonstrators expect?

Once in place, we will work with the delivery partner to design and shape evaluation activity for this programme. It is likely that we will look for a combination of measures including data and soft intelligence to inform the final evaluation.

Reporting will be conducted by the Delivery Partner, who will provide quarterly progress reports to the DfE. Whilst the Delivery Partner will be responsible for shaping the reporting structure, DfE will want to ensure that any reporting will not have a disproportionate impact on teacher workload.

Type and reach of support provided by Demonstrators

What will support look like? Will schools/colleges be expected to visit Demonstrators?

It will be up to schools and colleges to determine the nature of support provided. We anticipate that Demonstrators will visit other schools / colleges or encourage their wider network to visit them.

Can we work with colleges and schools across a number of regions?

Yes.

Can tech be specific to subject areas such as maths or areas of pupil need; for example SEND?

Yes.

¹

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/844380/General_Election_Guidance_2019.pdf

Is it possible to make use of partners abroad; for example, video links/webinars from research institutions and universities?

Yes.

Where lead Demonstrators are part of a trust, is it acceptable to limit support to schools within that trust?

All bids from lead Demonstrators who meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed. However, applicants should be aware that an aim of the programme is to support a broad range of institutions, and therefore consideration should be given to support both within and outside of existing MAT structures.

General Programme and application form questions

Can the project lead be a member of staff from the business team of a MAT?

In order for DfE to check the capacity and capability that sits behind the proposal, a lead institution must be provided on the application form; including the URN, headteacher details and the performance details of that institution.

However, we recognise that there may be some situations, where it makes sense for central members of staff already leading on technology to act as the nominated project lead. This is permissible so long as they work closely with the named schools within the bid.

Is there any conflict of interest for schools/colleges looking to apply for both the EdTech Testbed programme and Demonstrator Programme?

As long as applicants are able to demonstrate eligibility and capacity, they can apply for both programmes.

Can appendices be attached to applications?

Appendices will not be considered as part of the application process.

If we are not the lead demonstrator school in the application can we still be the organisation to project manage this?

All funding will be allocated to the lead applicant who will be ultimately accountable for ensuring conditions of grant. However, we recognise that some work strands may be delegated to schools / colleges within the trust, for example project management.

We are a standalone LA school. Is it more likely that this funding will be awarded to schools who are part of a MAT?

All schools and colleges will be considered if they meet the eligibility criteria. There will be no preferential treatment for particular types of school or college.

Eligibility criteria

Would we be able to bid as a lead Demonstrator in partnership with another institution if we each meet some, but not all, of the criteria?

If the institution does not meet all elements of the eligibility criteria/performance criteria, they would be unable to apply as a lead demonstrator. However, institutions which meet some – but not all – of the criteria can apply as part of a partnership/consortium.

We are aware that some institutions may not, for various reasons, be able to provide all performance and Ofsted data. Where this is the case, additional information should be provided under question 17. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.

We are a college with significant provision in Applied General qualifications. What information should we provide?

The APS score for Applied General for 2017-18 should be provided under question 17 of the EOI. To remain consistent with the existing A Level and Tech Level criteria, we would expect only those colleges where the majority of students take this type of qualification to use their Applied General APS scores.

If we are a MAT where two of the schools meet all criteria, should we apply as a consortium or as a single institution?

Both schools would be free to apply as a lead demonstrator. Schools could form a consortium together or could lead separate consortia.

If performance data is suppressed, as in the case for many SEN schools, do they still qualify? Can any SEN qualify?

All schools would need to meet the eligibility criteria to apply to be the lead demonstrator, however we encourage schools in this position to apply as part of a consortium.

Marketing and funding

Will there be a process for identifying schools who need support as there is with School Improvement funding? And whose responsibility will it be to get the school on board to provide support?

No, however we plan to publish a list of the Demonstrators on GOV.UK, along with the expertise and support on offer, so that schools and colleges can get in touch with them directly.

Responsibility for brokering support between Demonstrators and a wider network will ultimately lie with the Demonstrators themselves, with support and assistance provided by DfE and Delivery Partner.

Can funding be spent on marketing?

Demonstrators will not be able to spend funding on marketing materials, however the DfE will continue to promote this programme through existing networks, comms and newsletters to schools and colleges.

We find that proposed expenditure is something we are struggling to cost/include. Could you provide more help/guidance on how this looks?

During the Skype Q&A session on 6 November, we stated that we would take this question away to provide some further thought following the session and to see if we were able to provide some more detail. Due to Purdah restrictions, we are unable to provide additional detail beyond the information already provided within the EOI.

Could funding be used for the schools being supported to help them with costs of providing cover/travel costs, to encourage better involvement and uptake?

Yes, that would be an acceptable use of the funding available.

Can institutions offer match funding to strengthen and improve the reach of existing tech projects?

Yes.

Can external companies; for example IT companies, form part of a consortium and can some funding be directed to them to support training?

The majority of funding should be allocated to schools and colleges involved in this project, and this should be considered within the costing elements of your bids. We recognise that some Demonstrators may buy-in additional services.

Consortium working

Will the DfE be forming the consortia or it will it be the responsibility of individual institutions?

Consortia should be formed before applications are submitted. The DfE will not be responsible for brokering consortium arrangements.

The Delivery Partner

Who are the delivery partners and how are they paired with the schools?

One Delivery Partner will be selected following a procurement exercise, which went live on the 1st November. We will provide further information in due course.

Will the delivery partner be independent of any particular hardware / software manufacturer?

We do not anticipate that the delivery partner would have any affiliation to one type of tech or one tech company. We will require them to work across a wide range of Demonstrator Schools and Colleges using a variety of hardware / software.