



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Community-based English language competition

Stage 2 prospectus

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Section 1

The competition

On 15 January 2013, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, launched stage 1 of this £6 million competition to discover and support projects that can deliver innovative and financially-sustainable community-based English language programmes.

We are seeking projects that will work with our target learner groups; across our priority geographical areas, and will deliver programmes that will address participants' integration into British society alongside their proficiency in English.

Stage 1 of the competition, for which entrants were required to submit a brief Expression of Interest form outlining the basis of their idea, closed on 15 March 2013. The department was delighted to receive 130 entries of a very high standard.

It is not necessary to have entered stage 1 in order to enter stage 2 of the competition: stage 1 was designed to be primarily for the benefit of entrants, all of whom received feedback on their proposals, and those eligible entrants who submitted the strongest or most innovative proposals received a small Development Support Grant to support their entry into stage 2.

Aim

Through this competition, we want to discover and support programmes that:

- will deliver entry level, community-based English language provision to our target learner groups
- help to integrate participants into their local communities
- can combine **innovation** with economies of scale
- can deliver genuine value for money; and can be made **financially-sustainable** over the longer term - ie beyond the period of government funding support
- will be delivered across our priority areas of England

Funding available

Up to £6 million is available to support the winning programmes. We anticipate funding up to 4 proposals.

We therefore require the organisations, consortia or collaborating organisations, to which we award funding to be of sufficient size and experience to allow them to successfully handle a public funding allocation of this size.

We are now pleased to launch stage 2 of the competition.

Entries must be received by 10am, Monday 15 July 2013.

Section 2

Who we want to help

We want to target this provision at those most in need. Key characteristics of the target learners will include:

- those with the lowest levels of spoken English
- those isolated due to their lack of English
- those who are permanently resident in the UK
- those who are no longer eligible for fee remission for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Skills for Life provision (as funded via the Skills Funding Agency)
- those who have not previously accessed English classes funded by the Skills Funding Agency, even if they were previously eligible for fee remission
- adults - this investment is funded at those aged 19 and over

Data collated from various sources, including the 2011 Census, illustrates that those meeting these characteristics are likely to come from the Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Somali communities, as they have the lowest self-reported levels of fluency in English. We anticipate that women from these communities will be particularly strongly represented.

We are not looking to set strict eligibility criteria for those with whom the successful projects will work, rather that we are giving an indication of the types of learners we want to benefit.

As this competition is seeking to fund programmes that will use language tuition as a means to integrate learners into British society, we do not intend to focus it on those who have been in the UK for only a short period, or who are not intending to live in the UK for the long term (for instance those who have come to the UK to work for a short time), or those who do not have permission to do so.

On this basis, therefore, we would be happy for projects to be aimed at those who have been granted refugee status in the UK. However, the department is unable to support proposals which are aimed at those currently seeking asylum in the UK.

Entrants must demonstrate their ability to reach out to these target learner groups.

Where we are looking: our priority areas

We want to focus this investment in those areas where we know many residents have low levels of English, and this prevents them from playing a full role in their local communities.

The local authority areas listed below are those which have the highest populations of our target learner groups; the largest number of students currently enrolled on English for Speakers of Other Languages Skills for Life Courses; and the highest number of school pupils registered as having English as a Second Language (ESL).

Our list of priority areas has been reconsidered in light of the findings of the 2011 Census which, for the first time, asked respondents questions on their main language, and their proficiency in English.

Birmingham	Lambeth
Blackburn with Darwen	Leicester
Bradford	Luton
Brent	Manchester
Bristol	Newham
Camden	Oldham
Ealing	Pendle
Enfield	Redbridge
Hackney	Rochdale
Hammersmith and Fulham	Sheffield
Haringey	Slough
Harrow	Tower Hamlets
Hounslow	Waltham Forest
Hyndburn	Westminster
Kirklees	

We would be happy to fund projects that cover local authority areas that, whilst not on this priority list, can be demonstrated to have a high level of need for this type of English language provision.

As stated in the stage 1 prospectus, it is at the sole discretion of the department as to where projects are based. Funding will be awarded on the basis of merit, not the location of the project. We may fund projects in areas other than those listed above, and we may not fund projects in all of the areas listed above.

Section 3

The stage 2 process

This is the main part of the competition. Interested organisations must now submit a detailed business case - using the application form and proformas attached to this prospectus - that demonstrates precisely how their proposed project meets the department's aims, outcomes and criteria. Entrants must also demonstrate their ability to deliver the proposal, and to do so on the scale we are seeking.

Funding levels

Entrants are invited to **state the total amount of funding** (split by financial years) they are requesting to implement their project.

In line with the amount of money available for these projects, and the number of contracts we expect to award, we expect projects to be of a value of at least £1 million.

We have up to £6 million of funding available between September 2013 and 31 March 2015. Entrants are asked in the finance proforma attached to the application form to split their funding profile between financial years. We expect that most projects will have a front-loaded funding profile to help them become established, but this may not be the case for all.

Innovation

We are especially keen to promote innovation through this competition. Evidence of innovation will help distinguish between a strong proposal and a winning bid. We will be looking for evidence of innovation throughout proposals, and will be reserving top marks against the key Impacts criterion for entries that demonstrate innovative approaches in addressing them. This could be in the form of new and/or novel ideas, either for the means of teaching English, the way the provision would be structured, how the proposal could be made financially sustainable, or from the range of organisations collaborating.

Partnership and collaboration

The department places particular emphasis on the benefits of collaborative working to this process. We consider that, in order to achieve genuine innovation in the provision and delivery of community-based, entry level English language training, the skills, knowledge and experience of a range of different types of organisations working with target groups on integration need to be brought together. Partnerships and collaborations will need to be of a sufficient size and scope to deliver programmes on the stated scale, but will also need to be able to reach into very local, and often isolated, communities of which learners are a part.

For instance, we know that there are a large number of voluntary organisations across our priority areas delivering valuable language and community services to our target learner groups. These organisations often have the best ability to reach out into what can often be very isolated communities.

We also know that local authorities and Further Education colleges often run outreach English for Speakers of Other Languages programmes with a larger capacity. National English for Speakers of Other Languages and adult education-focussed bodies have a depth of subject knowledge and professionalism, as well as the capacity to run larger-scale programmes. Social enterprises, meanwhile, have expertise in making community projects financially sustainable.

We want to help establish and to support programme proposals that will incorporate aspects of many or all of this range of characteristics and approaches. It is in this way that we consider there is the best likelihood of creating projects that can really set the standard for this type of English language provision: that can create a step-change in the community-based language market.

Governance arrangements between partner or collaborating organisations will be the responsibility of the organisations concerned. The department will seek assurance that appropriate arrangements are ready to be in place - for instance contracts or agreements setting out each organisation's responsibilities for project implementation, monitoring etc; the proportion of the overall funding they will receive and the timescales on which they will receive this money. The department will take no responsibility for the implementation of, and adherence to, these agreements.

The department's primary relationship will be with the organisation to which funding is being awarded, which is also the organisation the department will hold responsible for the correct use of the funding, and successful implementation of the project. The department will also hold the lead organisation responsible for ensuring both their own propriety and that of their partner organisations: that they do not bring the project, competition or department into any form of disrepute.

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Section 4

Outcomes and requirements

We consider 2 of the 3 criteria overleaf to be particularly important in terms of the outcomes and requirements we want to see from winning proposals: impact and financial viability. These outcomes are explained in more detail below.

We will weight our assessment of these outcomes to reflect their importance.

Impact

We want to support projects that are going to have a meaningful and lasting impact **on their learners, their areas**, and on the **future provision** of entry level, community-based English language training.

We will assess a proposal's likely impact on learners by the number forecast to benefit from the programme; the proficiency in English they will achieve and the proposal's focus on both their integration into the local community, and their progression after engaging with the project: what are they doing that they would not have done prior to enrolment?

We will assess a proposal's likely impact on an area by considering your assessment of the present effect of there being a significant population without proficient English. We are interested in how your proposal would include, or impact upon, English-speaking locals, local businesses and public services.

We will assess a proposal's likely impact on future entry level, community-based English language provision by considering whether the ideas put forward are sufficiently innovative as to be likely to set a new standard, or benchmark, which other courses may follow. This may be through the project's use of partnership working; its emphasis on ongoing financial sustainability; its focus on ensuring courses are accessible and attractive to the often hard-to-reach learners, or the way in which it addresses learners' integration needs. Impact could also be achieved through a proposal being readily replicable (ie is not tailored to the needs of one group, community or area to the exclusion of others), or easy to scale-up to meet an increase in demand.

Financial viability: best use of money and sustainability

In assessing **best use of money**, we will be looking for projects that demonstrate:

- that costs, and costs per output, present the best use of money
- that financial risks are identified and managed
- that costs and any other funding are profiled in a sensible way

We want to support proposals that can convincingly demonstrate that they have the potential to become **financially sustainable**: that they will be able to continue running after the period of Government funding has finished.

To do this, entrants will need to show how the project's ongoing implementation or delivery costs (for instance, staff costs, course materials or venue hire costs) will be met after the period of government funding has expired; how they will generate future income streams, and what the risks are around those income streams. Entrants may also wish to consider how income 'in kind' would contribute to their proposal's sustainability - for instance the value of volunteers' time, or free use of a venue.

We do not expect projects to be generating, or in receipt of, additional funding during the period of funding from the department. Some projects, however, may be able to achieve this, in which case it should be set out in the finance proformas. Financial sustainability will be measured only from the point at which government funding ceases.

The stage 2 application form provides 2 opportunities to demonstrate financial sustainability: in a narrative section (Q.6), and in the finance templates.

Note: All funding from the department is **resource funding only**: it may not be spent on capital items (eg property and equipment, fixed assets, etc).

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Criteria

All stage 2 entries must demonstrate in the application form how they meet the criteria and outcomes set out below. These criteria expand upon on those set out at stage 1, against which stage 1 entries were assessed and offered feedback.

We have indicated the weighting attached to each criterion in the description below.

Criteria	Weighting (%)
<p>Impact of project</p> <p><i>...on learners</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the project's impact on our target learner groups, eg proficiency in English, their integration needs and progression the accessibility and attractiveness of the project to target learners <p><i>... on areas</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the project's wider impact across our priority areas or other areas of demonstrable need, eg on other local residents, businesses and public services total geographical coverage proposed <p><i>... on future community-based language provision</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the impact of the project on the future provision of community-based English language the project could be readily replicated, or scaled-up, to meet an increase in demand 	40%
<p>Financial viability: best use of money and sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the proposed means of financial sustainability is realistic, robust and the risks are manageable the proposal demonstrates best use of money 	35%
<p>Deliverability</p> <p><i>Partnership arrangements</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has a consortium or delivery partnerships been formed? are suitable and robust governance arrangements in place? does the mix of organisations within the partnership provide the necessary skills/knowledge/experience required by the proposal? 	15%

<p>Experience of running [similar] projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experience of working with target learner groups • ability to reach and engage with the target learner groups in the context of social integration • clear proposals for monitoring and evaluation arrangements 	
<p>Project Management</p> <p>Capacity and project management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrangements for required staff to be in place, and necessary premises, materials etc • demonstration of a clear course structure - eg length, intensiveness • a realistic risk register • a robust implementation plan (timings of project) 	10%

Assessment

All completed entries will be considered by a panel against the stated criteria. The evidence put forward by each entry in response to each criterion will be assessed against a 5-point scale:

- 0 - absence of evidence / criterion not met
- 1 - meets some of the requirements of the criterion
- 2 - meets most of the requirements of the criterion
- 3 - meets all of the requirements of the criterion
- 4 - meets all of the requirements of the criterion (*and, with respect to the Impact criterion, demonstrates an innovative approach in doing so*)

Scoring guide

Score	Rating	Description
0	absence of evidence / criterion not met	<p>A proposal at this rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • builds very little or no confidence that the bidder can deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures • builds very little or no confidence that the bidder's approach/solution will deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence or an inappropriate approach/solution.
1	meets some of the requirements of the criterion	<p>A proposal at this rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raises reservations that the bidder can deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures • raises reservations that the bidder's approach/solution will deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence or an inappropriate approach/solution.
2	meets most of the requirements of the criterion	<p>A proposal at this rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suggests that the bidder can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures • provides an acceptable approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising standard strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies.
3	meets all of the requirements of the criterion	<p>A proposal at this rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • builds confidence that the bidder can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures • provides a good approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising appropriately tailored strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies.
4	meets all of the requirements of the criterion and has demonstrated an innovative approach in doing so	<p>A proposal at this rating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • builds a high level of confidence that the bidder can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures • provides an exceptional approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising appropriately tailored and at times innovative strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies. <p>Note: has demonstrated an innovative approach particularly applicable to impact and financial viability.</p>

The assessment panel will make recommendations to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as to which proposals to fund. The final decision as to which proposals receive funding will rest with the Secretary of State.

Section 5

After stage 2 closes

The department will work further with those entrants who are successful at stage 2.

Entrants must note that, in order to assist the department in achieving the best use of this investment, winning entrants may be requested to demonstrate flexibility in the geographical spread of their projects.

We will discuss the areas to be covered so as to ensure that, between them, the winning entrants are able to best cover our priority areas. We will also assist with any additional partnership working arrangements that need to be finalised to achieve this.

Payment of grant funding

The winning entrants will be required to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with the department, which will set out the expectations of both the recipient and the department.

We will work with the recipient to agree the profile of the funding - the amount to be awarded; the size and frequency of instalments and the timespan over which they will be made. These arrangements will reflect the implementation needs of the project.

Funding will be primarily for the 2013 to 2014 and 2014 to 2015 financial years; although there is scope to consider extending this into 2015 to 2016, if an extended timetable will genuinely benefit the programme.

Monitoring and evaluation

Successful entrants will be required to make regular progress reports to the department, and will be provided with a user-friendly spreadsheet on which to capture data on their learners and their progression.

We will work with successful entrants to agree targets and milestones throughout the lifetime of the project. If these targets and milestones are not met, we will reserve the right to withhold a funding payment, or terminate the Grant Funding Agreement.